

# Oil Lamps from the Third to the Eighth Century C.E. at Scythopolis–Bet Shean

SHULAMIT HADAD

## INTRODUCTION

This article describes clay and bronze oil lamps discovered in the Scythopolis–Bet Shean excavations. Surveys have been undertaken at Bet Shean since the end of the last century. Between 1922 and 1932 extensive excavations were conducted at tell Bet Shean by an American expedition that excavated all strata from the Ottoman to the Neolithic period, as well as the Monastery of the Lady Mary, and published its findings in several reports.<sup>1</sup> In 1980/81 an excavation of limited scope was conducted at the site; since 1986 excavations have been conducted on a much larger scale.<sup>2</sup> The status of Bet Shean, as one of the principal cities in the East in ancient times, resulted from its geographic location at an important crossroads and in a region rich in fertile land and water (Fig. A). Ptolemy II Philadelphus (308–246 B.C.E.), king of Hellenistic Egypt, apparently rebuilt Bet Shean as a Hellenistic *polis*, calling it Nysa-Scythopolis. Subsequently the city was included, together with nine additional cities east of the Jordan River, in the confederacy of ten Hellenistic-Roman cities (the Decapolis).

I am very grateful to Gideon Foerster and Yoram Tsafir with whose assistance and encouragement this article was written. This study represents part of my M.A. thesis, written under the direction of Dan Barag. Drawings of the oil lamps were done by Lyora Maniewitz; photographs are by Gabi Laron. My thanks to Benny Arubas for preparing the map and plan, and to Elias Khamis, who read the Kufic inscriptions on the Umayyad lamps (type 3).

<sup>1</sup>A. Rowe, *The Topography and History of Beth-Shan* (Philadelphia, 1930); G. M. Fitzgerald, *Beth-Shan Excavations, 1921–1923: The Arab and Byzantine Levels* (Philadelphia, 1931); idem, *A Sixth Century Monastery at Beth-Shan* (Philadelphia, 1939).

<sup>2</sup>Two notable expeditions were excavating at Bet Shean: the Hebrew University of Jerusalem expedition headed by Gideon Foerster and Yoram Tsafir and the expedition of the Israel Antiquities Authority directed by Rachel Bar-Nathan and Gabi Mazor. Thus far both expeditions have published only preliminary reports: G. Foerster and Y. Tsafir, “The Bet Shean Project: B. Center of Ancient Bet Shean—North,” *Excavations and Surveys in Israel* 6 (1987–88), 25–43; eidem, “The Bet Shean Project—1988: Hebrew University Expedition,” *ibid.*, 7–8 (1988–89), 15–22; Y. Tsafir and G. Foerster, “Bet Shean Excavation Project—1988/1989,” *ibid.*, 9 (1989–90), 120–28; G. Foerster and Y. Tsafir, “The Bet Shean Excavation Project (1989–1991): City Center (North): Excavations of the Hebrew University Expedition,” *ibid.*, 11 (1992), 3–32; G. Mazor, “The Bet Shean Project: A. City Center of Ancient Bet Shean—South,” *ibid.*, 6 (1987–88), 10–24; eidem, “The Bet Shean Project—1988: Department of Antiquities Expedition,” *ibid.*, 7–8 (1988–89), 22–32; R. Bar-Nathan and G. Mazor, “The Bet Shean Excavation Project (1989–1991): City Center (South) and Tel Iztabba Area: Excavations of the Antiquities Authority Expedition,” *ibid.*, 11 (1992), 33–51. See also the article by Y. Tsafir and G. Foerster in this volume of *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*.

The principal urban design of Roman Scythopolis can be attributed to the second century C.E. The civic center was established at the foot of tell Bet Shean (the biblical-period mound that became the acropolis of the city) to its west and south (Fig. B). The main streets are colonnades; Valley Street is a good example. It includes a basalt-paved street for local and commercial traffic. Beyond the rows of columns are covered sidewalks and then rows of shops. This colonnaded street ended at the Central Monument, a structure of marble columns and arches erected on a large limestone foundation. Beyond the Central Monument is the basilica. A row of eighteen monolithic columns with Ionic capitals was erected south of the Central Monument. In front of the colonnade is a shallow pool, decorated and paneled with marble, that reflected the colonnade. The basalt-paved street continued north of the Central Monument. To the right of the street was an additional monument, called the Monument of Antonius. A row of columns with Corinthian capitals continues from it to the north. On the other side of the street were the magnificent facades of the temple and nymphaeum. The temple, apparently connected with the cult of Dionysos, the principal god of the city, was a small but elegant structure. It included a pronaos with four columns supporting a Syrian gable and a round cella that apparently was surrounded by columns. The city's entertainment and cultural performances were concentrated in the theater adjacent to the city center and in the amphitheater built on the city's southern outskirts, outside the densely populated municipal territory.

In the fourth and fifth centuries C.E. the city underwent changes that were primarily influenced by two processes at work in Palestine at that time: the growth of the population of the region and the almost complete disappearance of pagans coupled with the triumph of Christianity. Within a few decades of the rise of Christianity, the temple was destroyed. Performances in the theater were also probably reduced in number, and it was finally abandoned in the fifth to sixth century C.E. The central church was built on the tell adjacent to the destroyed temple of Zeus. The crosses carved on building stones and in inscriptions are further testimony to a Christian presence. But as opposed to these phenomena, what was originally built as a hippodrome was converted into an amphitheater in the second half of the fourth century C.E.

In the Byzantine period, Palestine reached its peak of demographic growth, and Bet Shean–Scythopolis is one example of this. Perhaps the process of growth was accelerated in the city because it was chosen as the capital of the newly founded province of Palaestina Secunda, established at the end of the fourth century C.E. (Fig. A).

In the fifth and the beginning of the sixth century C.E. the purposeful approach to architecture and to city building typical of the Byzantine period reached its obvious expression. The area of the large Roman colonnade and the reflecting pool in front of it completely changed: a thick wall constituting the rear wall of a row of shops was built between the columns of the colonnade. The shops were erected on the reflecting pool after it was filled in. The street itself was paved with basalt stones, and an inscription inlaid among the paving stones near the amphitheater indicates that the pavement and the new water system were installed in 522 C.E. Based on two wall-mosaic inscriptions in Kufic script, these shops were built during the reign of Hisham (724–743 C.E.) in the year A.H. 120 (738 C.E.).

Squares and monumental public buildings, which once had been the splendor of the Roman city, were removed or changed their character to allow for greater economic and

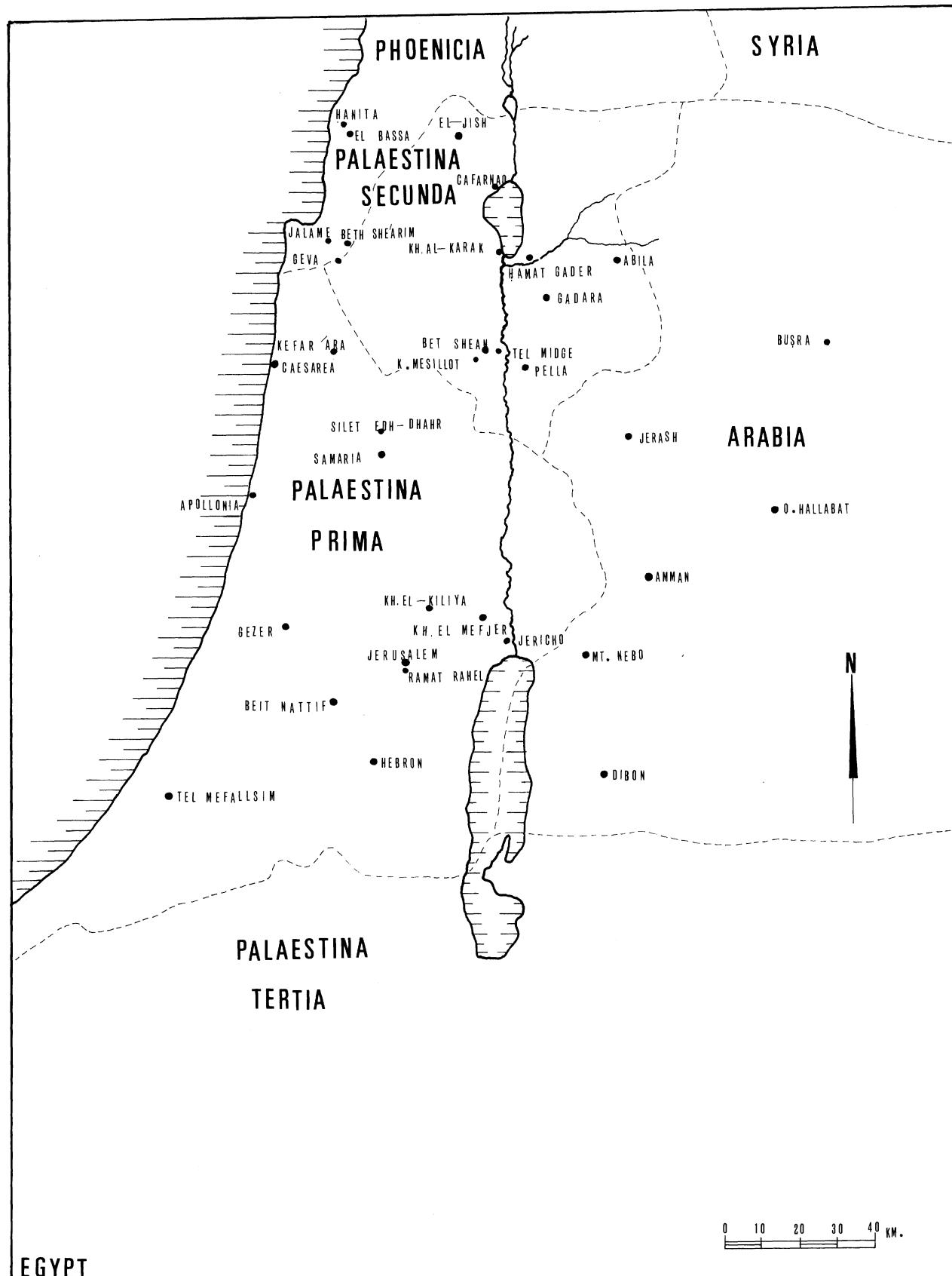


Fig. A Palestine from the late Roman period through the Islamic period (drawing by Benny Arubas)

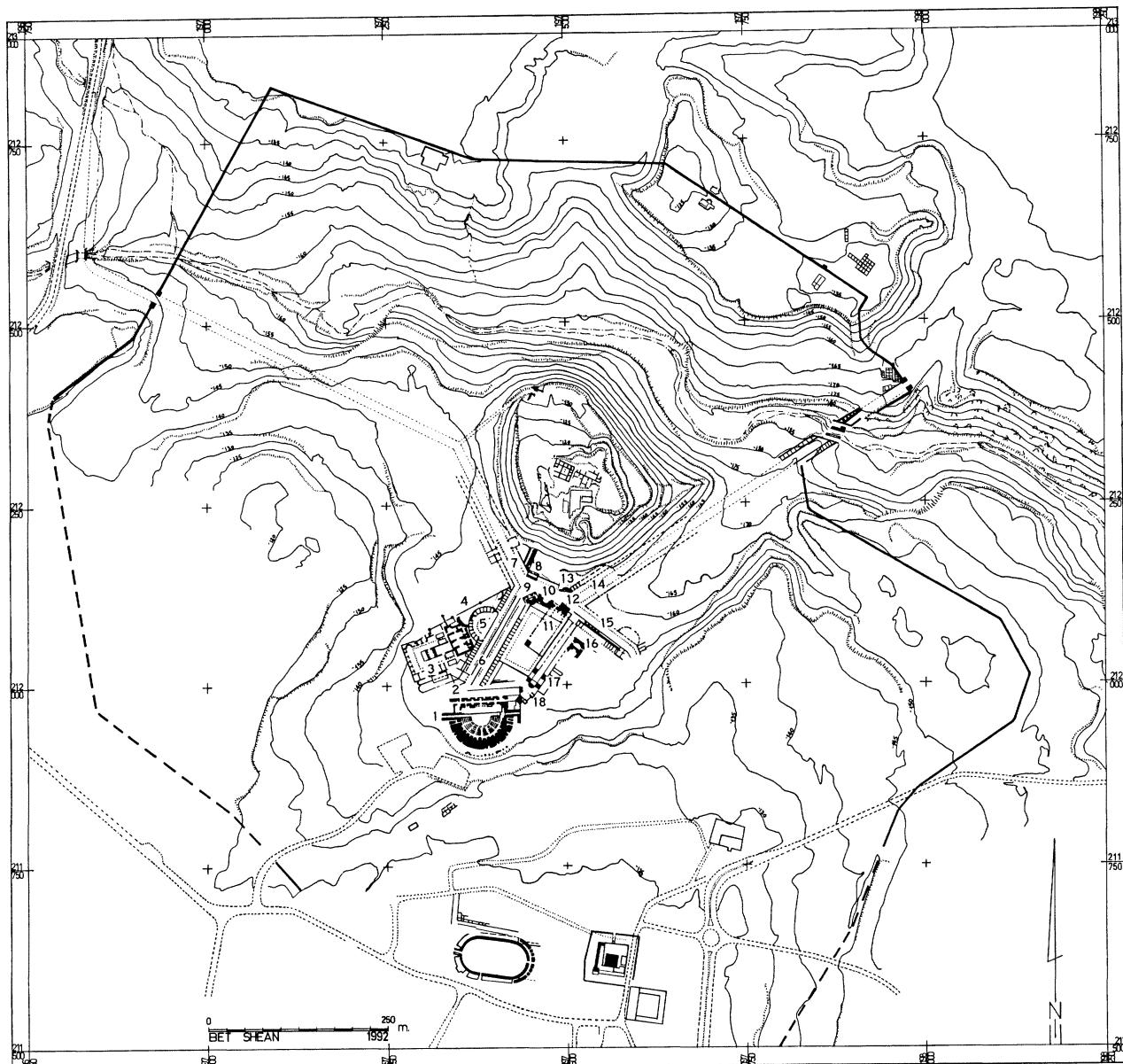
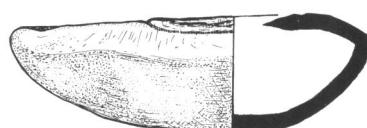


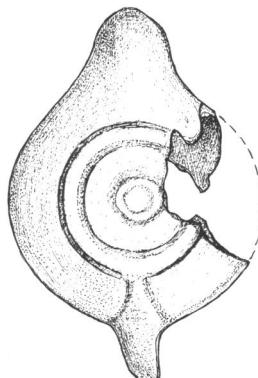
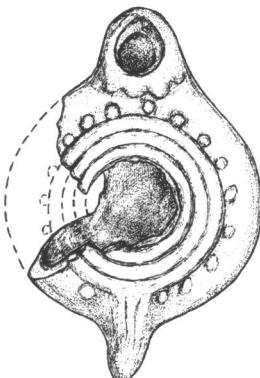
Fig. B General plan of Bet Shean, city center (drawing by Benny Arubas)

1. Theater	7. Street	13. Monument of Antonius
2. Propylaeum	8. Monumental propylaeum	14. Colonnaded street (Valley Street)
3. Bathhouse	9. Temple	15. Umayyad commercial street
4. Odeon	10. Nymphaeum	16. Roman colonnade and pool
5. Exedra	11. Basilica	17. Piered building
6. Colonnaded street with shops (Palladius Street)	12. Central Monument	18. Fountain house

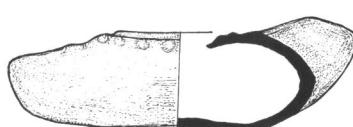


1

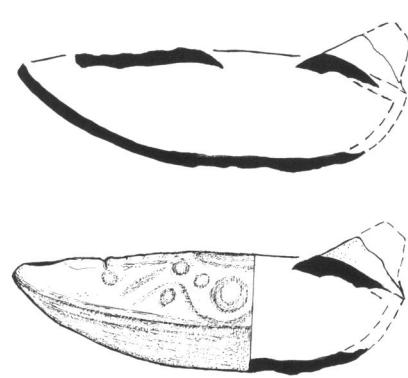
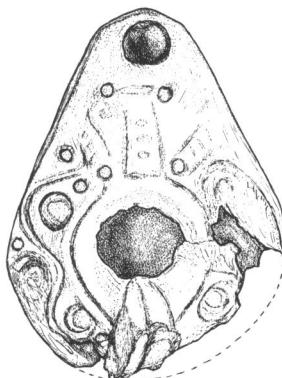
2



4

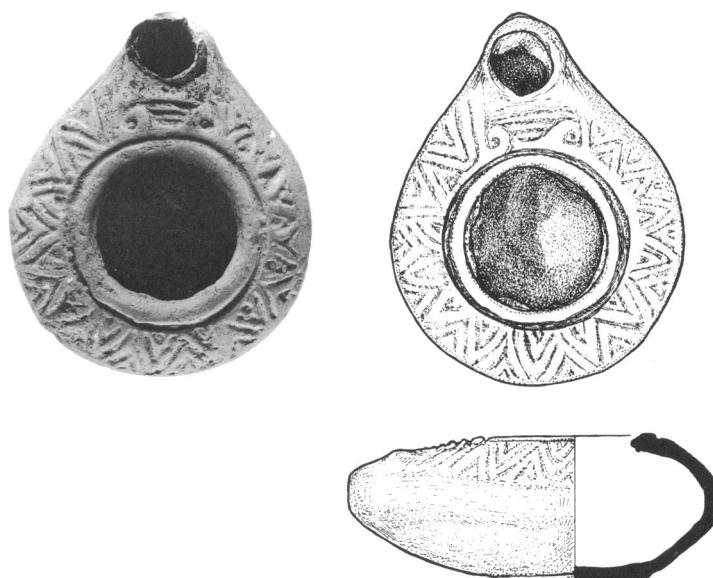


3

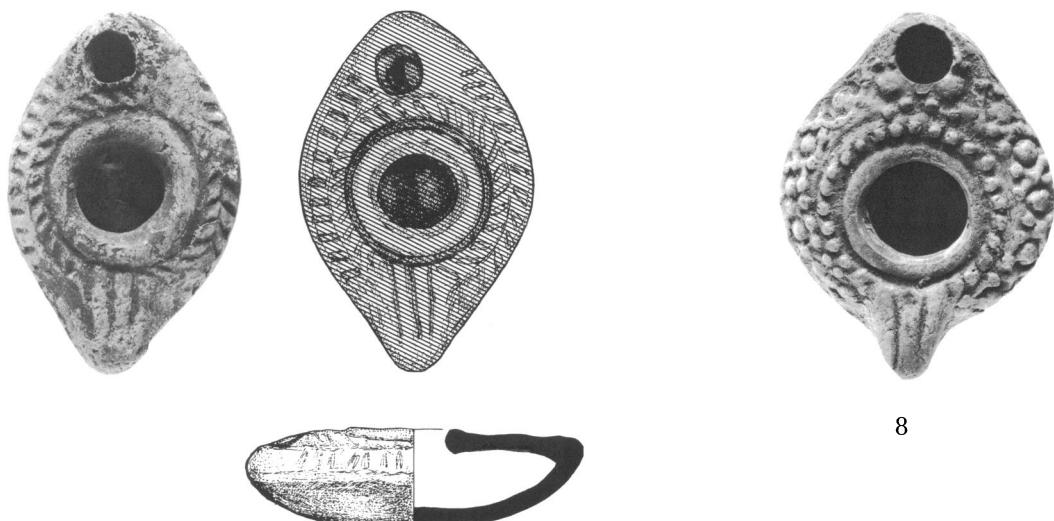


5

Drawings by Lyora Maniewitz. Photographs by Gabi Laron.

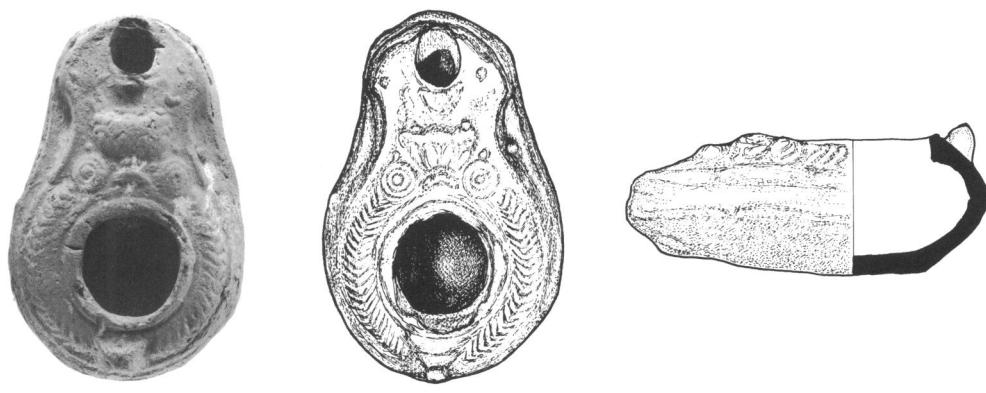


6



8

7



9



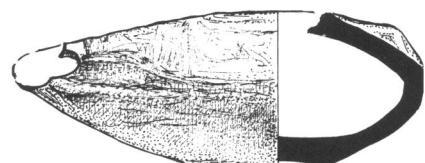
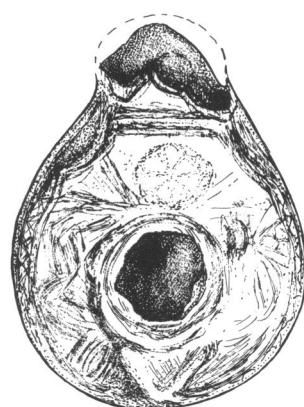
10



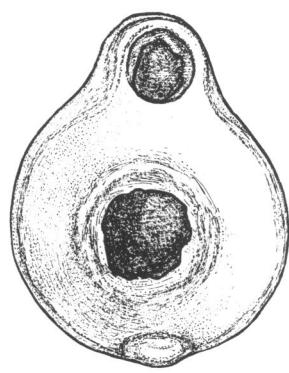
11



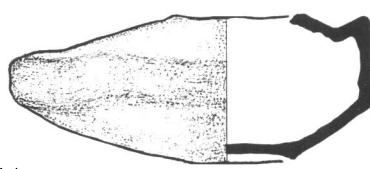
12



13



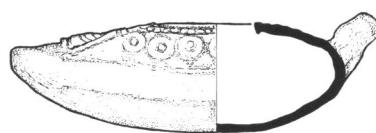
15



14



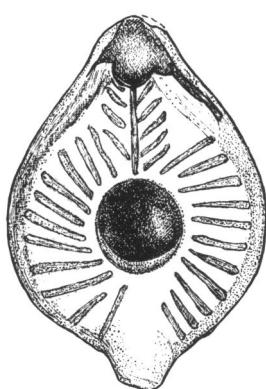
16



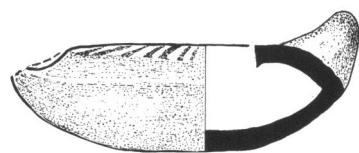
18



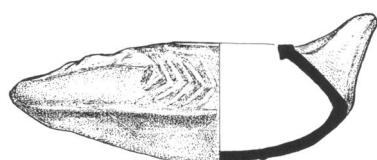
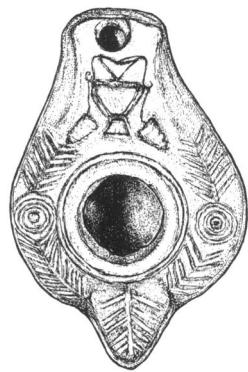
17



20



19



22

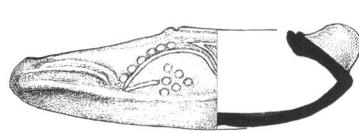
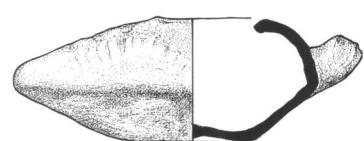
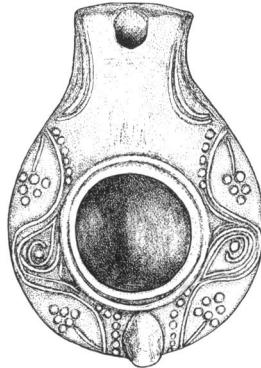
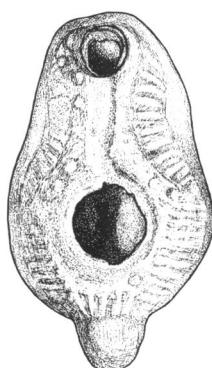
21



23

24

25



26

27



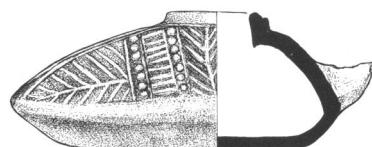
28



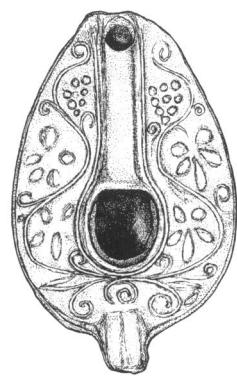
29



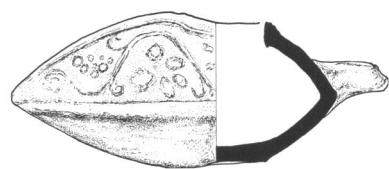
30



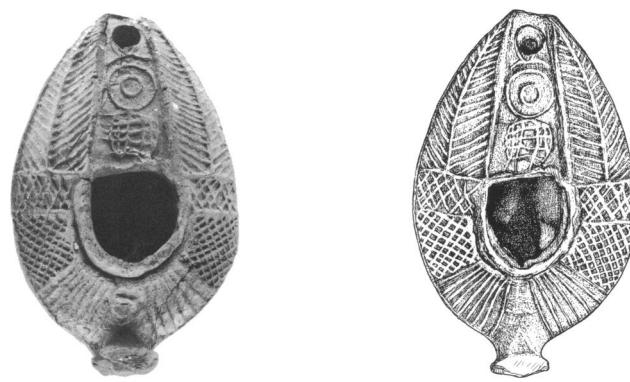
31



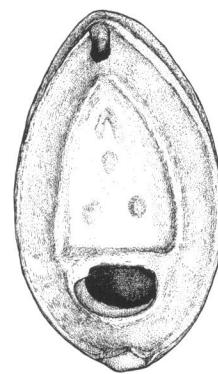
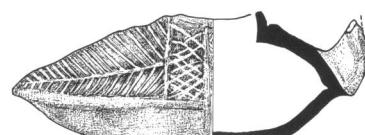
33



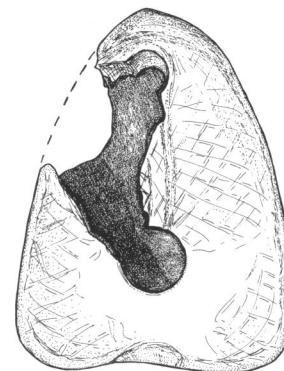
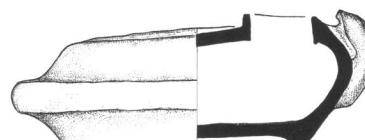
32



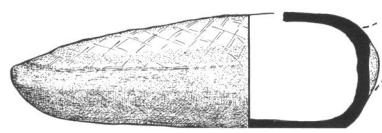
34

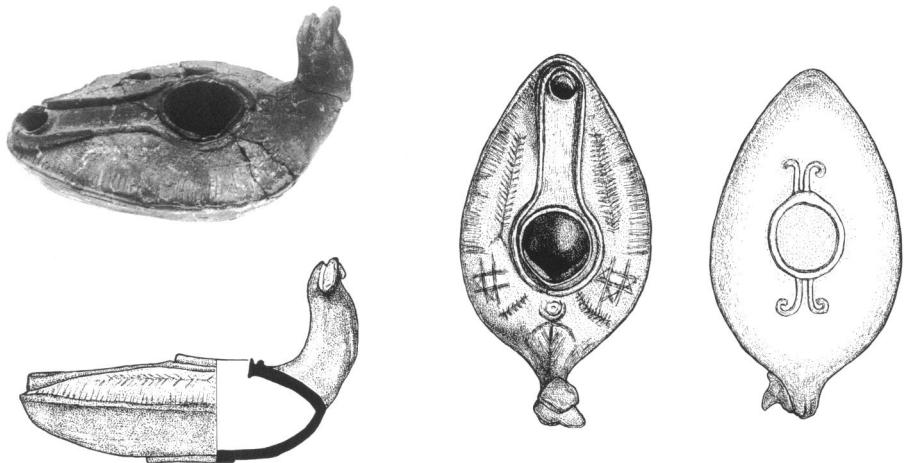


35



36





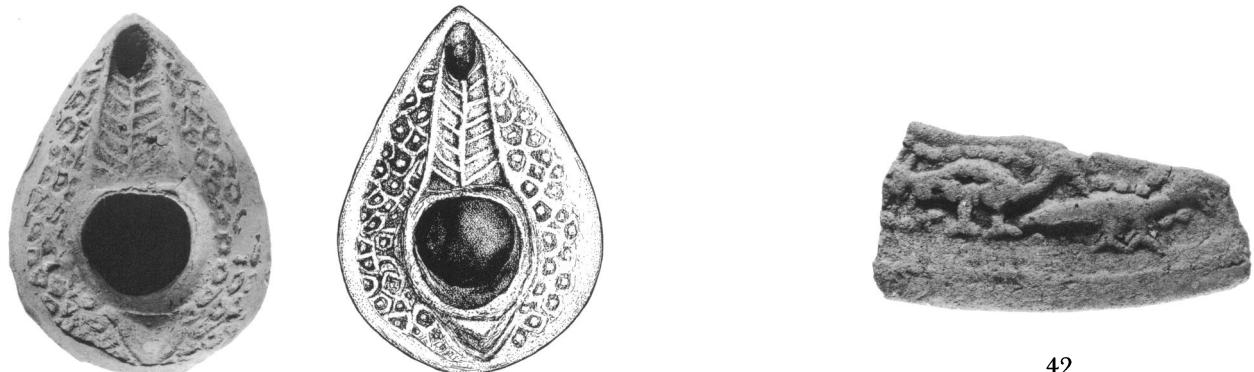
37



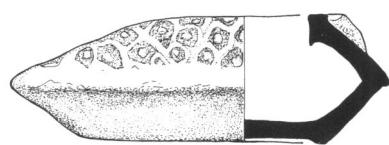
38

39

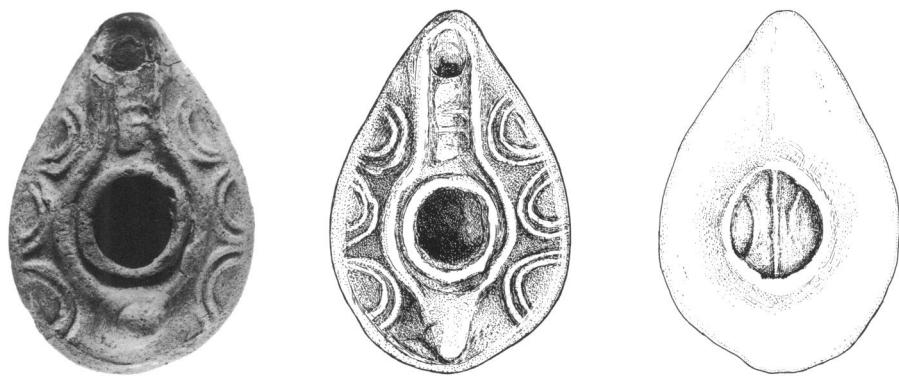
40



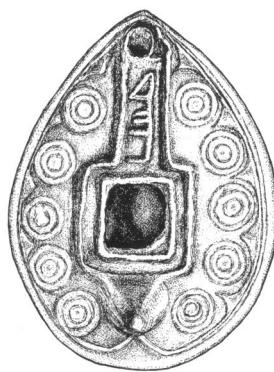
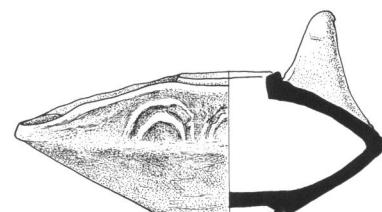
42



41

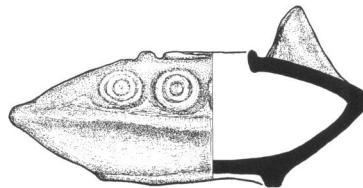


43

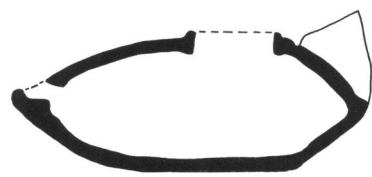
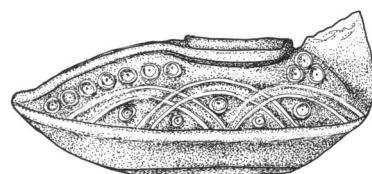
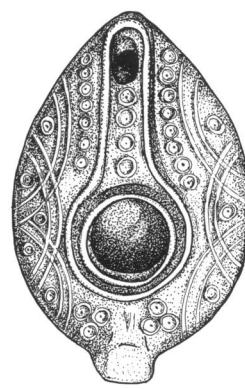


45

44



46



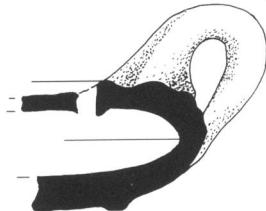
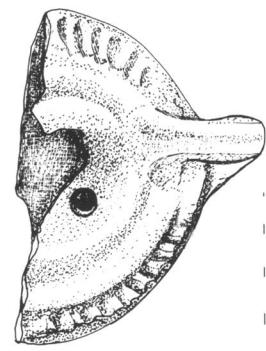
47



48



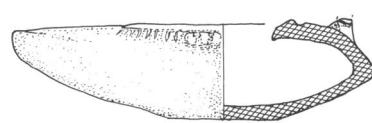
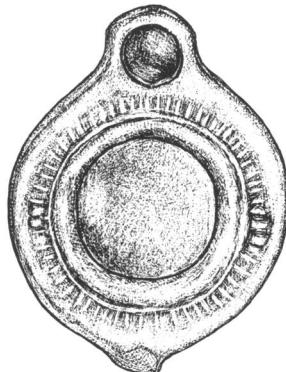
49



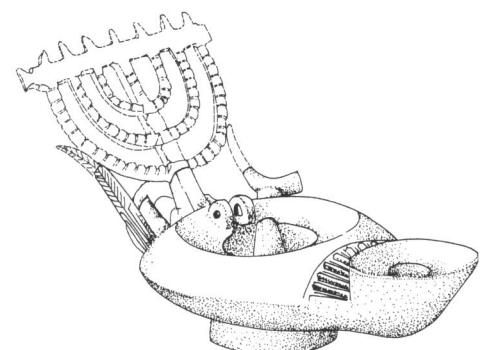
50



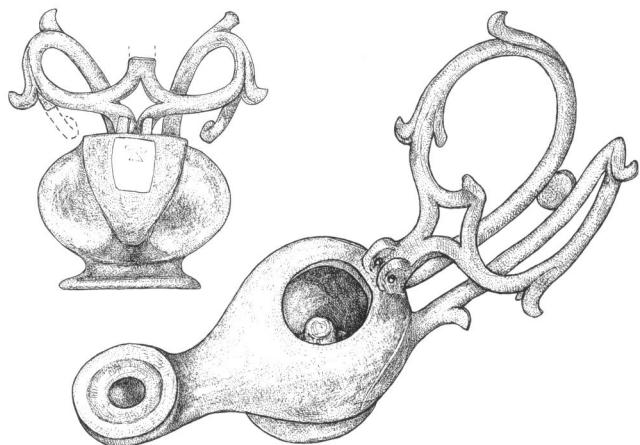
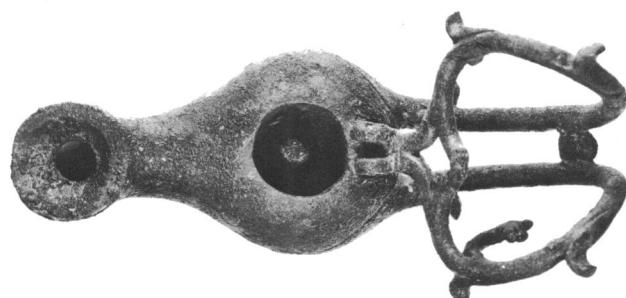
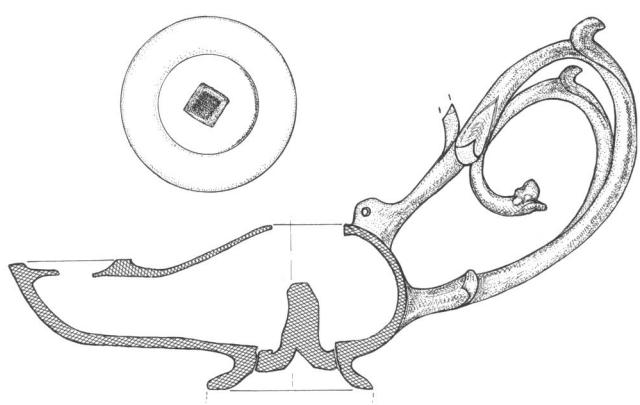
51



52



53



54

social activity. The basilica went out of use, and rooms, alleys, and colonnades were built in its area. Decorated monuments with no particular purpose were not destroyed, but no effort was made to restore and fix sections that collapsed. This trend increased toward the end of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh century C.E.; at this time private citizens began to take over public areas.

The excavations show that, after the Muslim conquest and until the mid-eighth century, the town, now called Baysan, suffered a long, slow decline. The picture emerging from the excavations reflects a degenerating state of affairs. The intrusion of private buildings into the public domain became completely routine. Streets and squares were turned into narrow alleys. Sewage channels drained directly from houses and workshops into the street. Pottery kilns from the Umayyad period were built in the area that had previously been the city center, near the theater and basilica, and also in the amphitheater. Private structures were erected in the orchestra of the theater and in the arena of the amphitheater. The walls of houses abutted the portico columns.

This process was halted by the earthquake of 749 at the end of the Umayyad period. In the Abbasid period the area was leveled to the extent possible over the destruction, and new residential quarters were built, for the most part cut off from the orientation of the ancient city's buildings.<sup>3</sup>

The oil lamps described in this study were discovered in the excavations conducted by the Hebrew University Expedition under the direction of Gideon Foerster and Yoram Tsafrir. Part of the corpus of lamps from Bet Shean dates from the third century B.C.E. to the fourteenth century C.E. without any breaks. The most important work on this subject, written by D. Barag, used lamps and coins to date glass vessels discovered in Palestine. Another study, by Y. Elgavish, presented an artistic analysis of the lamps together with their dates. Private collections that include a wide variety of lamp types from different periods have also been published. All these works will be brought into this discussion.

The lamps presented here are important primarily because of their discovery in a systematic archaeological excavation at one site. Most of the lamps may be dated on the basis of the stratigraphic context in which they were found, others on the basis of comparisons to lamps found at other sites.

For this discussion, prominent in importance among the archaeological complexes in Bet Shean is the Umayyad shopping street. The shops along this street were built in 738 C.E., destroyed in the earthquake of 749, and not reconstructed. The exact year of the earthquake was determined by a hoard of gold and silver coins discovered in one of the shops (Loc. 54158).<sup>4</sup> Both complete specimens and fragments of pottery and glass vessels, clay lamps, and one bronze lamp were found in these shops.<sup>5</sup> These finds helped in assigning exact dates to the three types of Umayyad clay lamps, previously defined either as Byzantine-Umayyad or as Umayyad-Abbasid lamps.

<sup>3</sup>Y. Tsafrir and G. Foerster, "From Byzantine Scythopolis to Arab Baysan: Changing Urban Concepts," *Cathedra* 64 (1992), 3–30 (in Hebrew), with additional bibliography on the various publications relating to Bet Shean; E. Khamis, "Two Wall-Mosaic Inscriptions from Umayyad Bet Shean," *Cathedra* 85 (1997), 45–64 (in Hebrew).

<sup>4</sup>Y. Tsafrir and G. Foerster, "The Dating of the 'Earthquake of the Sabbatical Year' of 749 C.E. in Palestine," *BSO/AJS* 55 (1992), 231–35.

<sup>5</sup>Foerster and Tsafrir, "Bet Shean—North," 32–35; Tsafrir and Foerster, "Bet Shean—1988/1989," 126–28.

In the absence of agreement among scholars as to the dating of the different historical periods, the following designations and dates are used here:

Late Roman period	3rd–4th century C.E.
Byzantine period	primarily 5th–6th century C.E.
Byzantine-Umayyad period	6th–mid-8th century C.E.
Umayyad period	7th–mid-8th century C.E.

The lamps described below were discovered in excavations conducted in 1980/81 and 1986–91. The excavations at Bet Shean ended in 1997. A very large number of lamps have been discovered; some represent new types, but the majority enrich those already known. The new findings not only strengthen the dates already fixed but also allow dates to be ascribed to previously unassigned material. The lamps are presented in chronological order within each of the following categories: first, the local clay specimens, followed by imported clay lamps, and, finally, the bronze lamps. A catalogue of the lamps under discussion is presented at the end of this article, with catalogue numbers corresponding to the figure numbers in the text.

#### I. LOCAL CLAY OIL LAMPS

##### *Late Roman Period*

*Type 1* (Fig. 1). This type is a late variant of the discus lamps from the first to second century C.E. They differ from one another in size and in the clay from which they are made. One complete lamp and fifteen fragments of this type were found (Fig. 1). They are made from light brown clay sometimes shading into greenish tones or from yellowish clay. One lamp was red-slipped. The rim of type 1 lamps is thick relative to the thin rim of most discus lamps. The lamps are also slightly larger but still preserve the shape of the small, rounded nozzle and the round body. These lamps also lack handles.

The decoration is composed of concentric triangles or the more widespread ovolo design. The volute decoration that adorned the nozzles of discus lamps does not appear here. The filling hole is large and was formed either by breaking the discus irregularly after firing, or when the lamp was made and the clay was still pliable. There was no requirement to create a round filling hole; sometimes it is almost square. In most examples the discus is undecorated, but a few bear the ovolo design, which also decorates the rim. These lamps have a low ring base. Lamps of this type were found in catacombs at Beth She'arim and dated by N. Avigad to the third century C.E.,<sup>6</sup> and in the burial cave at Silet edh-Dhahr.<sup>7</sup>

Most of the lamps from Bet Shean, including the complete specimen, were found in a trial section near the foundations of the Roman temple (Loc. 884). Early and late Roman pottery and four third-century C.E. coins were found together with these lamps, allowing them to be dated to the third century C.E.

<sup>6</sup>N. Avigad, *Beth She'arim*, III (Jerusalem, 1976), 185, pl. LXX:5, 6.

<sup>7</sup>O. R. Sellers and D. C. Baramki, "A Roman-Byzantine Burial Cave in Northern Palestine," *BASOR* Supplementary Studies 15–16 (1953), 32–34, type II, fig. 35:322. In P. P. Kahane's opinion ("Rock-Cut Tombs at Huqoq: Notes on the Finds," *'Atiqot* 3 [1961], 129), this type belongs to the degenerated type of round discus lamps and should be dated to the 2nd–3rd or 4th century C.E.

*Type 2* (Fig. 2). Only one lamp of this type was found, its base not preserved (Fig. 2). The lamp is made from very light brown clay, and traces of red slip remain. The rim is decorated with an impressed design of small flowers. The filling hole is large and surrounded by two pronounced ridges. The solid handle is grooved. No exact parallel for this lamp has been found at other sites.<sup>8</sup>

The lamp was discovered in a fill that contained a thick layer of brick, pipe and tile fragments from a bathhouse, and architectural elements made of *nari* limestone, adjacent to the southern gate complex of the Roman basilica (Loc. 74024). This layer was buried under Rometalkes alley from the sixth century C.E. Late Roman pottery fragments and three coins were found with the lamp: a second- or third-century C.E. coin, a coin of Gordian III (239–240 C.E.), and a coin of Valerian (253–260 C.E.). Based on the ceramic and numismatic finds, this lamp should probably be dated to the third century C.E. and possibly to the second half of that century.

*Type 3* (Fig. 3). This type is known as the “Jebel Jofeh type,” after the site in Amman where more than one hundred clay lamps of this type were discovered in a single tomb.<sup>9</sup> One almost complete lamp and three fragments of this type were found at Bet Shean (Fig. 3).

The lamps are made from light to dark brown clay; one lamp fragment is of gray clay. The decoration is simple and composed of a string of raised dots. The filling hole is large and was formed in one of two ways: either by breaking the discus after it was defined by ridges, or when the lamp was prepared and the clay was still soft. In the latter instance, part of the unornamented discus was also preserved. The nozzle is small and round. The solid vertical handle is decorated with two incisions in front and in back where they join to the ring base, which is decorated with several circles.

Another lamp belonging to type 3 is different in both size and decoration. This lamp was not preserved completely, but the small part that did survive attests to its beauty and impressive design. The lamp is made from very light brown clay. The rim is decorated with a design of alternating impressed stylized leaves and concentric circles. Separating the rim and discus is a circle composed of alternating small rectangles and circles done in relief. The discus slants slightly inward and is decorated with small rectangles. The filling hole is large.

The lamps from Bet Shean were all discovered near the amphitheater but cannot be dated on the basis of the context in which they were found. The lamps in the cave at Jebel Jofeh were dated by Barag to the third century C.E.,<sup>10</sup> the date also proposed for the lamps from Bet Shean.

*Type 4* (Fig. 4). Type 4 lamps are recognizable first and foremost by the well-levigated orange-brown or grayish-brown clay from which they are made, characteristic of type 4

<sup>8</sup>A lamp similar in general shape to this type was discovered in catacombs at Beth She'arim and dated by Avigad (*Beth She'arim*, III, 185 f, pl. LXX:8) to the 3rd century C.E. See also type 8 of C. A. Kennedy, “The Development of the Lamp in Palestine,” *Berytus* 14 (1963), 76, pl. XXIII:519. It is to be noted that the three lamps published by Kennedy originated in the Jordan Valley. Kennedy dated this type, after F. O. Waagé, to the 4th century C.E.

<sup>9</sup>G. L. Harding, “A Roman Family Vault on Jebel Jofeh, ‘Amman,” *QDAP* 14 (1950), 81–94.

<sup>10</sup>D. Barag, “Glass Vessels of the Roman and Byzantine Periods in Palestine,” 2 vols. (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1970, in Hebrew), I, 85 f.

and type 7 lamps only. The lamps are slipped with reddish-brown slip, also typical of type 7 lamps. The quality of their firing is very inferior, which certainly accounts for the fact that not a single complete specimen was preserved with the thirty-two fragments discovered at Bet Shean.

The ornamentation on the rim is very simple: (a) a decoration of circles in high relief (Fig. 4); (b) an impressed decoration composed of simple geometric patterns such as ellipses and wavy lines. The small discus was sometimes decorated with an impressed pattern of circles and sometimes left unornamented. The handle is small, vertical, and undecorated. The filling hole is large, and the only preserved base is a ring base decorated with several circles.

This type is widespread at Jerash, where it is dated to the third to fourth century C.E.<sup>11</sup> A few examples were discovered at Pella and also ascribed to the third to fourth century C.E.<sup>12</sup> No type 4 lamps from Palestine have been hitherto published.

The date assigned to the lamps from Jerash and Pella is confirmed by the finds from Bet Shean. All the lamp fragments were discovered in the excavation of the complex opposite the south gate of the basilica, in a fill between the sixth-century C.E. stratum and the occupation levels and debris connected to the Roman basilica. Late Roman pottery fragments and four coins of the third to fourth century C.E. were found together with the lamps: a third-century C.E. coin of Salonina, a coin of Trebonianus Gallus (251–253 C.E.), and two coins of Constantine the Great (307–337 C.E.). These lamps can therefore apparently be dated to 250–350 C.E.

*Type 5 (Fig. 5).* Lamps of this type, very frequent at Beth She'arim, are commonly called the “Beth She'arim type.” They are prevalent only in northern Palestine,<sup>13</sup> with a few examples found in southern Phoenicia.<sup>14</sup> At Bet Shean two lamps of this type were discovered: one almost complete specimen lacking a small part of the rim and handle, and a small fragment of the rim and discus of a second lamp. The almost complete lamp is ornamented with an impressed pattern of circles surrounded by intertwined half-circles and a ladder design. The nozzle is decorated with a rectangle containing three impressions. The filling hole was formed by breaking the unornamented discus. The lamp has a small grooved handle and a ring base. The junction of upper and lower parts of the lamp is covered by a thin layer of clay and is smoothed to such a point that it creates a sharp carination (Fig. 5). The second lamp fragment also bears an impressed pattern of small decorated circles at set intervals. The filling hole is small and surrounded by an undecorated discus; it was formed during preparation of the lamp and not by breaking the discus.

In his discussion of this lamp type, Avigad distinguished between two variants, with

<sup>11</sup>The lamps at Jerash were discovered primarily in tombs: *Jerash Archaeological Project, 1981–1983*, I, ed. F. Zayadine (Amman, 1986), 16, 25, pl. v (hereafter Zayadine, *Jerash*, I); I. 'Oweiss, “A Roman-Byzantine Tomb at Jerash,” *AAJord* 29 (1985), 31–40 (in Arabic). Lamps were found in other excavation areas as well: V. A. Clark, “The Lamps,” in Zayadine, *Jerash*, I, 253, 289, pl. xix:2.

<sup>12</sup>R. H. Smith, *Pella of the Decapolis*, I (Wooster, Ohio, 1973), 213 f, 216, pl. 65:507, pl. 78:312, pl. 79:392. The three examples from Pella were discovered in tombs.

<sup>13</sup>Avigad, *Beth She'arim*, III, 187–89.

<sup>14</sup>D. Barag, *Ḥanita, Tomb xv: A Tomb of the Third and Early Fourth Century CE*, ‘Atiqot (English series) 13 (Jerusalem, 1978), 40.

the Bet Shean specimens belonging to variant a, dated by him to the first half of the fourth century C.E.<sup>15</sup> Type 5 lamps were also discovered in tomb xv at Ḥanita and dated by Barag to the late third and first half of the fourth century C.E.<sup>16</sup> Avigad's date is also suggested for the lamps from Jalame.<sup>17</sup>

The almost complete lamp from Bet Shean was discovered near the Roman temple in a channel built near a wall (Loc. 75107). The lamp was found together with late Roman pottery and one coin of Constantine the Great (307–337 C.E.). The lamp and the pottery were part of the fill that blocked the channel. The fragment of the second lamp was discovered in the basilica, in one of the rooms erected inside it in the Byzantine period after it ceased to function as originally intended. On the basis of the finds from Beth She'arim and Bet Shean, these lamps should be dated to the first half of the fourth century C.E.

*Type 6 (Fig. 6).* One complete type 6 lamp, known as the "Karm al-Sheikh (Jerusalem) type,"<sup>18</sup> was discovered at Bet Shean. This type is prevalent mainly in southern Palestine and is rare in the north.<sup>19</sup> The lamp is made from light brown clay and is slipped with reddish slip. The filling hole is very large. The rim is decorated with triangles, the nozzle with two volutes. There is a geometric ornamentation in the center of the ring base (Fig. 6).

According to Barag, most of the burials in the cemetery at Karm al-Sheikh, where this type of lamp was discovered, date from the mid-third to mid-fourth century C.E.<sup>20</sup> The Bet Shean lamp was discovered near the eastern entrance to the amphitheater, in a fill intended to close up the entrance (Loc. 619). Also discovered in this locus were type 8 lamps from the late Roman period, Byzantine-period type 1 lamps, and coins from the fourth to fifth century C.E. The type 6 lamp should be dated to the fourth century C.E., although whether to the beginning or the end of that century cannot be determined from the context in which it was found. However, on the basis of its resemblance to the lamps discovered at Beit Nattif, cistern 1, its date can be narrowed to the first half of the fourth century C.E.<sup>21</sup>

*Type 7 (Figs. 7, 8).* This type is one of the most widespread at Bet Shean. Thus far, twenty complete lamps and 240 fragments of different sizes have been discovered. These are ovoid lamps whose nozzle is not emphasized but rather constitutes part of the body together with the handle. The filling hole is large relative to the dimensions of the lamp and is surrounded by a pronounced ridge (Fig. 7). The lamps are made from orange-brown or grayish-brown clay, and the quality of firing is inferior. All the lamps are slipped

<sup>15</sup>Avigad, *Beth She'arim*, III, 187–89. The Bet Shean lamps parallel no. 17 in particular.

<sup>16</sup>Barag, *Ḥanita*, 37–40. Barag's type 3 parallels the type under discussion. The Bet Shean lamps parallel type 3/a.

<sup>17</sup>A. Manzoni MacDonnell, "The Terracotta Lamps," in *Excavations at Jalame: Site of a Glass Factory in Late Roman Palestine*, ed. G. Davidson Weinberg (Columbia, Mo., 1988), 119.

<sup>18</sup>D. C. Baramki, "Note on a Cemetery at Karm al-Sheikh, Jerusalem," *QDAP* 1 (1932), 3–5.

<sup>19</sup>R. Rosenthal and R. Sivan, *Ancient Lamps in the Schloessinger Collection*, *Qedem* 8 (Jerusalem, 1978), 99, group I.

<sup>20</sup>Barag, "Glass," 22.

<sup>21</sup>D. C. Baramki, "Two Roman Cisterns at Beit Nattif," *QDAP* 5 (1936), 1–10, pl. vi:8–10, 13. My thanks to Dan Barag who drew my attention to this.

in red or brown or some middle tone between the two; the clay is one of the identification marks of these lamps.

Except for one lamp, they are all decorated with impressed designs, most of them geometric patterns, including herringbone (the most common), vertical lines across the width of the rim or two rows of lines one above the other, circles of varying sizes and in different arrays, rhombi across the width of the rim, and crescents arranged in clockwise order. One lamp is decorated with a stylized branch. Sometimes the filling hole is surrounded by a circle of incised lines. Only one lamp is ornamented with dots in high relief (Fig. 8). The handle on each lamp is decorated with two parallel lines. In a few lamps the base is also decorated: one lamp is ornamented with a stylized bunch of grapes composed of circles; the remaining bases are decorated with a stylized flower set within a circle. The lamps are not uniform in size, ranging from 7.3 to 10 cm in length and sometimes longer.

This type is widespread in northern Palestine only.<sup>22</sup> Its prevalence at Bet Shean is indicated by the fact that more than two hundred fragments were used as fill in the base of a wall constructed in the sixth century C.E. in the Roman basilica. This type is also very common at Pella, where excavators dated it to the third to fourth century C.E.,<sup>23</sup> and at Gadara,<sup>24</sup> where it was dated by I. Nielsen to the fourth to fifth century C.E.<sup>25</sup> At Beth She'arim these lamps were dated by Avigad to the first half of the fourth century C.E.<sup>26</sup>

At Bet Shean, dozens of complete lamps and fragments of types 7 and 8 were discovered in a trash pit east of the temple square (Loc. 65027) together with late Roman and Byzantine pottery and 159 coins: one coin from the mid-third century C.E., 157 from the fourth to fifth century C.E., and one Byzantine M coin (512–539 C.E.). (M represents a coin of 40 nummi.) Several other lamps were discovered near the eastern entrance to the amphitheater (Loc. 614). This locus and Locus 619 are part of the fill intended to close up the east entrance to the amphitheater and raise the ground level. Together with these lamps, excavators found pottery, type 8 and type 9 lamps from the late Roman period, Byzantine-period type 1 and type 2 lamps, and coins from the fourth to fifth century C.E. Both the fact that the amphitheater was built in the second half of the fourth century C.E., and the finding of a Byzantine coin in the trash pit adjacent to the temple, allow these lamps to be dated to the second half of the fourth and the fifth century C.E.

*Type 8 (Figs. 9–12).* Type 8 lamps are an imitation of the type of lamps found in cistern II at Beit Nattif.<sup>27</sup> While common enough at Bet Shean, they are not as prevalent as the previous type. Thus far ten complete specimens and fifty-four fragments of different sizes have been discovered (Fig. 9). The lamps are made from clay in varying brown

<sup>22</sup>Rosenthal and Sivan, *Schloessinger*, 111, nos. 450, 451.

<sup>23</sup>A. McNicoll et al., *Pella in Jordan*, I (Canberra, 1982), 97 f, pl. 137:1, 3, 4, 6, for discussion of the finds from tomb 39A. These lamps constitute two-thirds of all lamps found in the tomb, and the excavators believe that they were either made on site or nearby: A. McNicoll et al., *Pella in Jordan*, II (Sydney, 1992), 139–41, pl. 93:1–8, pl. 94:a–h.

<sup>24</sup>K. da Costa, "Some Lamps from Excavations at Umm Qeis," in Th. Weber et al., "Gadara of the Decapolis: Preliminary Report of the 1989 Season at Umm Qeis," *AAJord* 34 (1990), 335. This type is known as the bilanceolate type.

<sup>25</sup>I. Nielsen et al., *Gadara-Umm Qēs*, III: *Die byzantinischen Thermen* (Wiesbaden, 1993), 170, pl. 36:341–43.

<sup>26</sup>Avigad, *Beth She'arim*, III, 189, pl. LXXI:27–29.

<sup>27</sup>Baramki, "Beit Nattif," 1–10.

tones, sometimes shading into green and sometimes into gray. Two lamps were made from dark gray clay. Of the lamps found at Bet Shean, only one is red-slipped.<sup>28</sup>

The rim is ornamented in one of two ways: (a) a vegetal decoration, including stylized bunches of grapes—a rare ornamentation on Bet Shean lamps, appearing only twice; or (b) the more common geometric decoration: a herringbone pattern, a string or two of fine dots set between two ridges with the rest of the rim remaining undecorated, raised dots surrounded by intertwined circles, intertwined triangles with the filling hole surrounded by a braid pattern, intermittent concentric circles and rhombi, guilloche pattern, and ovolo pattern. Undecorated lamps of this type are rare at Bet Shean. One such fragment had a small discus and represents the only lamp with a discus included in this type at Bet Shean. Both the rim and the discus are unadorned.

The lamp nozzle is concave on both sides and bears decoration specific to this part of the lamp and different from that on the rim. The decoration on the nozzle includes a lamp mold that is a copy of the lamp itself (Fig. 10),<sup>29</sup> a “peacock’s tail” in high relief, an amphora, a three-petaled flower, a rosette, two rows of herringbone pattern with a row of dots between them, and circles in different arrays. Some of the nozzles were thickened and raised, and this raised part was decorated.

All lamps except for one have a small pyramidal handle that is sometimes decorated with concentric triangles. The one exception had a loop handle that was not preserved (Fig. 11). This type of handle is rare on these lamps.<sup>30</sup> All lamps have a ring base. The average length of these lamps is 9 cm, with the shortest measuring 8 cm and the longest 11.5 cm.

Lamps of this type were dated by R. Rosenthal and R. Sivan to the second half of the third and the fourth century C.E., with later examples continuing into the fifth century C.E.<sup>31</sup> This type parallels type 34 of Elgavish, which he dates to the first half of the fourth century C.E.<sup>32</sup> Lamps of this type at Pella were dated by A. McNicoll to the third to fourth century C.E.<sup>33</sup> and by K. da Costa to the second half of the fourth and the fifth century C.E.<sup>34</sup> At Gadara they were dated between the second half of the third and the fifth century C.E.<sup>35</sup>

Type 8 lamps also include those decorated with a cross, which parallel type 14 of C. A. Kennedy, dated to the fourth to fifth century C.E.<sup>36</sup> At Bet Shean only one such

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., 7. Unslipped lamps are rare at Beit Nattif.

<sup>29</sup>A similar lamp was discovered in Mambre. Its nozzle is decorated with a miniature lamp whose nozzle is decorated with a cross; see E. Mader, *Mambre* (Freiburg, 1957), 160, L164m. A 2nd-century C.E. lamp decorated with lamps was published by V. Sussman, *Ornamented Jewish Oil-Lamps from the Destruction of the Second Temple through the Bar-Kokhba Revolt* (Warminster, 1982), 119.

<sup>30</sup>Rosenthal and Sivan, *Schloessinger*, 107, nos. 436–38. Three lamps with a loop handle are found in this collection.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 105. See also Y. Israeli and U. Avida, *Oil-Lamps from Eretz Israel: The Louis and Carmen Warschaw Collection at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem* (Jerusalem, 1988), 116.

<sup>32</sup>Y. Elgavish, “The Art of Lamps in Israel in the Roman and Byzantine Periods,” 2 vols. (Ph.D. diss., Jerusalem, 1962, in Hebrew), I, 195.

<sup>33</sup>McNicoll et al., *Pella*, I, 97 f, pl. 137:2.

<sup>34</sup>P. C. Edwards et al., “Preliminary Report on the University of Sydney’s Tenth Season of Excavations at Pella (Tabaqat Fahl) in 1988,” *AAJord* 34 (1990), 68, 71.

<sup>35</sup>Da Costa, “Umm Qeis,” 335, fig. 8:4, 6.

<sup>36</sup>Kennedy, “Development,” 80 f.

lamp was discovered, from which only the nozzle survived (Fig. 12). This lamp was found in the level above the destroyed shops in an area used for agriculture during the Mamluk period (Loc. 841). This lamp cannot be dated on the basis of the Bet Shean excavations. Taking into consideration that the cross decoration did not appear in Christian art before the sixth decade of the fourth century C.E., and that the symbol became common only later, toward the end of the century,<sup>37</sup> this lamp can probably be dated to the end of the fourth or the fifth century C.E., and possibly only to the fifth.

The majority of lamps of this type from Bet Shean, as with the previous type, were discovered near the eastern entrance to the amphitheater (Loc. 614). These lamps should be assigned to the second half of the fourth and the fifth century C.E.<sup>38</sup>

*Type 9 (Figs. 13–15).* Lamps of this type are among those defined as Samaritan lamps.<sup>39</sup> Two complete specimens and two fragments were discovered at Bet Shean. They are made from yellowish-light brown clay. The filling hole was formed by breaking the discus after it was defined by a pronounced ridge. The nozzle is slightly concave on both sides, and the base is a small ring base (Figs. 13, 14). The two complete lamps differ from each other in the shape of the handle: one is pyramidal, the other a small knob.<sup>40</sup> The lamp with the pyramidal handle is decorated with geometric patterns. The nozzle is ornamented with a rosette. This characteristic of a decoration specific to the nozzle connects this lamp with the previous type and the one that follows. The lamp with the knob handle is unornamented.

Included with type 9 lamps are those with multiple wick holes (*polylychnoi*).<sup>41</sup> At Bet Shean, part of the nozzle and rim of one such lamp was discovered (Fig. 15). The lamp is made from dark brown clay. The wick hole is found at the end of the nozzle, suggesting that it had more than one wick hole. The rim is decorated with ridges and dots. These lamps were dated by V. Sussman to the third to fourth century C.E.<sup>42</sup> At Silet edh-Dhahr, they were dated by O. R. Sellers and D. C. Baramki to the fourth or the beginning of the fifth century C.E.<sup>43</sup> Type 9 lamps parallel type 51 of Elgavish, dated to the fourth to fifth century C.E.<sup>44</sup>

The fragment of the *polylychnos* was discovered in the drainage channel of the Byzantine street near the amphitheater (Loc. 620). Roman and Byzantine pottery was found together with the lamp. The two complete lamps were discovered in Locus 614, and it is

<sup>37</sup> Barag, "Glass," I, 40 f.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., II, 57 f.

<sup>39</sup> V. Sussman, "A Burial Cave at Kefar 'Ara," *Atiqot* 11 (1976), 92–101. Sussman distinguishes between four Samaritan types, of which the type under discussion is the earliest. For an extensive discussion of this type, see eadem, "Samaritan Lamps of the Third–Fourth Centuries A.D.," *IEJ* 28 (1978), 238–50, and "Samaritan Cult Symbols as Illustrated on Oil Lamps from the Byzantine Period," *Israel—People and Land* 4 (1986–87), 133–46 (in Hebrew). It should be noted that a well-known Samaritan community lived in Bet Shean.

<sup>40</sup> V. Sussman, "The Samaritan Oil Lamps from Apollonia-Arsuf," *Tel-Aviv* 10 (1983), 73. A handle of this type is quite rare. Of all the lamps found at Apollonia-Arsuf, only no. 3 has a handle like this. A lamp with a similar handle and a Samaritan inscription was published by N. Zori, "A Lamp with a Samaritan Inscription," *Yedio't* 18 (1954), 270–71 (in Hebrew). The lamp was found at Tel Midge near Bet Shean.

<sup>41</sup> Sussman, "Samaritan Lamps," 241. This lamp belongs to variant no. 3.

<sup>42</sup> Sussman, "Apollonia," 85.

<sup>43</sup> Sellers and Baramki, "Cave," 37, type VII.

<sup>44</sup> Elgavish, "Art," I, 212.

therefore suggested that they should be dated to the second half of the fourth century C.E. This type may also have continued to the beginning of the fifth century C.E.

### *Byzantine Period*

*Type 1* (Figs. 16–18). Oil lamps of this type can be divided into three groups (A, B, and C), a division that is purely stylistic with no chronological or other developmental implications, as all the lamps were found together. The lamps are made from varying shades of brown or gray clay. Complete lamps were discovered in groups A and B, averaging 9 cm in length.

Type 1 lamps are characterized by two obvious characteristics: (a) a crowded and very beautiful ornamentation leaving no empty space (*horror vacui?*); and (b) an unexplained protuberance at the base of the lamp beneath the handle; it may have been intended to give stability to group C lamps with the large handles, but also appears on smaller lamps.

#### Group A

Lamps in this group are decorated with a herringbone pattern (the most common lamp ornamentation), concentric circles, or a guilloche pattern. The filling hole is surrounded by a string of small dots. The nozzle bears a design of concentric rhombi or circles in a frame that is usually square, or a stylized branch set within a rectangle, or unframed concentric circles (Fig. 16). This characteristic of ornamentation specific to the nozzle connects this type with the previous types. Group A lamps have a small grooved rectangular handle or a triangular handle ornamented with a branch design. The handle averages 1.5 cm in length. The base in most instances is a small ring base, but sometimes it is not defined at all.

Group A lamps are the most widespread of the three groups. They were found at Silet edh-Dhahr and dated by Sellers and Baramki to the fourth to sixth century C.E.,<sup>45</sup> at Jalame where they were attributed to the third quarter of the fourth century C.E.,<sup>46</sup> and in the mausoleum near Kibbutz Mesillot, near Bet Shean, where they were dated to the fourth to fifth century C.E.<sup>47</sup> At Pella they were discovered in a tomb that the excavators believe was built in the second half of the third century C.E. and remained in use until the third quarter of the fourth century C.E.<sup>48</sup>

#### Group B

Lamps of this group differ from group A lamps in the division and decoration of the lamp's surface. Two types of ornamentation are visible. (a) The surface of the lamp was divided into four to five circles decorated with geometric patterns or stylized flowers; the space between the circles was decorated with herringbone pattern or lines. The nozzles of two lamps, made in the same mold, were decorated with a seven-branched candlestick (menorah) standing on a tripod base. Six flames were indicated by dots set between two

<sup>45</sup> Sellers and Baramki, "Cave," 41, type x.

<sup>46</sup> Manzoni MacDonnell, "Terracotta," 133–35, pl. 6–4:87.

<sup>47</sup> R. Arav, "A Mausoleum near Kibbutz Mesillot," *'Atiqot* 10 (1980), 84–86, group C (in Hebrew). Nine lamps were discovered in this mausoleum, all belonging to group A.

<sup>48</sup> McNicoll et al., *Pella*, I, 97 f, pl. 137:5. Another lamp fragment from Pella identical to a lamp fragment from Bet Shean was published by Smith (*Pella*, I, 216, pl. 60:74) and dated by him as not earlier than the 3rd century C.E. and not later than the 4th century C.E.

ridges.<sup>49</sup> The wick hole is very charred, indicating the intensive use made of these lamps (Fig. 17). (b) Every surface of the lamp, including the nozzle, was ornamented with one design—guilloche, intertwined triangles, zigzag lines, or circles.

These lamps have a small open-fan-shaped handle decorated with several lines. The average length of the handle is 1.5–2 cm. On most of the lamps the base is not defined; on others the base is small and sunken. Lamps of this group are less prevalent than group A lamps and have been published in private collections only, by Kennedy and by Y. Israeli and U. Avida.<sup>50</sup> A candle whose nozzle is decorated with a seven-branched menorah was published by A. Reifenberg.<sup>51</sup>

### Group C

Only handles were discovered from this group. The handles, averaging in size from 2.5 to 4 cm, were affixed to the lamp only after it was made. The handles vary in shape—triangular, serrated leaf, and rounded—and are decorated with geometric patterns (Fig. 18).

Lamps from this group were discovered at Silet edh-Dhahr and dated by Sellers and Baramki to the fifth to sixth century C.E.<sup>52</sup> They also appear in the collection published by Kennedy.<sup>53</sup> This type parallels type 32 of Elgavish, dated to approximately the mid-fourth century C.E.<sup>54</sup> These lamps are widespread in the Bet Shean valley, with a few examples also discovered in eastern Transjordan at Pella.

Almost all the lamps of this type discovered at Bet Shean, with a few exceptions, were found in the thick layer of fill intended to block the eastern entrance to the amphitheater and to raise the ground level to that of the street built adjacent to it. This street was built in 522 C.E., according to the inscription inlaid among its stones.<sup>55</sup> All the lamps (450 complete specimens and fragments through the 1994/95 excavating season) were discovered amid very large quantities of Byzantine pottery fragments from the fifth and sixth centuries C.E. It appears, therefore, on the basis of the date of the road, that all the lamps can be dated to the fifth century C.E., but their manufacture may have continued in the sixth century C.E.

<sup>49</sup>The menorah that appears on this lamp parallels the third-period candlesticks of A. Negev ("The Chronology of the Seven-Branched Menorah," *Eretz-Israel* 8 [1957], 209 f [in Hebrew]), which he dated to the second half of the 4th and the first half of the 5th century C.E. For the menorah decoration on clay lamps, see I. Modrzeszka, *Studio iconologico delle lucerne siro-palestinesi del IV-VII sec. D.C.* (Rome, 1988), 24–27, and D. Korol, "Il primo ritrovamento di un oggetto sicuramente giudaico a Cimitile: Una lucerna con la rappresentazione della menorah," *Boreas* 13 (1990), 94–102.

<sup>50</sup>Kennedy, "Development," 87 f, type 21, nos. 714, 730, 734, 742. Included in this type are lamps from groups B and C. Altogether there are forty-five lamps of the type under discussion in this collection. Two of them are identical to the Bet Shean lamps and may have been made in the same mold. This is not surprising; as Kennedy notes, when the origin is known, the lamp comes from the Jordan Valley.

Israeli and Avida, *Warschaw*, 111, no. 320: the rim decoration on this lamp parallels group B lamps, but the handle is completely different. This collection includes eight additional lamps (nos. 310–17) belonging to group A. They were dated by Israeli and Avida, on the basis of the finds from Pella, to the 4th–5th century C.E.

<sup>51</sup>A. Reifenberg, "Jüdische Lampen," *JPOS* 16 (1936), 173 f, fig. 20. See there lamps of various types decorated with a candlestick.

<sup>52</sup>Sellers and Baramki, "Cave," 42 f, type XII.

<sup>53</sup>Kennedy, "Development," 87 f, nos. 722, 727. See also above, note 50.

<sup>54</sup>Elgavish, "Art," I, 193.

<sup>55</sup>Foerster and Tsafir, "Bet Shean—North," 38–41.

*Type 2* (Fig. 19). Only one complete lamp of this type was discovered. The lamp is made from dark brown clay. Its rim bears a radial decoration. The nozzle is slightly concave on both sides and ornamented with a stylized branch. These two characteristics connect this lamp with the three previous types. The handle is small and raised, and the base is undefined (Fig. 19).

A lamp of this type was discovered at Pella and dated to the third to fourth century C.E.<sup>56</sup> The Bet Shean lamp, like the previous types, was discovered near the eastern entrance to the amphitheater and is dated to the fifth to sixth century C.E.

*Type 3* (Fig. 20). Lamps of this type are characterized by their elongated pear shape. The nozzle is decorated with a palm branch or a cross (Fig. 20). The palm branch decoration, which was described by R. A. S. Macalister as a candlestick, has given these lamps their name.<sup>57</sup> Twenty-nine fragments of this type, prevalent mainly in southern Palestine,<sup>58</sup> were discovered at Bet Shean. The lamps are made from yellowish-light brown to dark brown clay. All the lamps have linear designs except for one fragment on which were preserved a few Greek letters.<sup>59</sup> All the nozzles were ornamented with a palm branch. The wick holes on several of the lamps exhibit a good amount of soot, indicating the extensive use made of them. All the lamps have a raised ring base.

Lamps of this type from Jerusalem were dated by J. Magness to the mid-sixth to late seventh/early eighth century C.E.<sup>60</sup> At Pella, these lamps were dated to the fifth to sixth century C.E., continuing until the second quarter of the eighth.<sup>61</sup> At Jerash, these lamps appear in the fifth to sixth century C.E. but do not continue beyond the mid-seventh.<sup>62</sup>

Of the three complete lamps recently discovered at Bet Shean, two were found in a layer of alluvium formed by flowing water at the entrance to the vault adjacent to the Roman basilica (Loc. 07061, Loc. 95701). The lamps were found together with pottery and coins from the Byzantine period. The third lamp was discovered in a Umayyad room (Loc. 94541) built in a Roman shop. This lamp was found in the occupation level together with Umayyad pottery and a Umayyad coin. According to D. Barag, type 3 lamps

<sup>56</sup>Smith, *Pella*, I, 215, pl. 84:384. A similar type is type XI at Silet edh-Dhahr except that the latter has a loop handle and broad nozzle. The nozzle is also decorated with a branch or “candlestick,” in the language of the excavators, which distinguishes it from the type referred to as the Byzantine candlestick type (type 3). This type is also rare at Silet edh-Dhahr, where only two such lamps were found. These lamps were dated by Sellers and Baramki (“Cave,” 42) to the 5th–6th century C.E.

<sup>57</sup>Rosenthal and Sivan, *Schloessinger*, 116, with discussion of the characteristics of this type and its date.

<sup>58</sup>Israeli and Avida, *Warschaw*, 145, and D. Barag, “A Tomb of the Byzantine Period near Netiv Ha-Lamed He,” *‘Atiqot* 7 (1974), 85 (in Hebrew).

<sup>59</sup>A lamp of this type with a Christian inscription was published by Fitzgerald (*Excavations*, 47) from his excavations at tell Bet Shean. For lamps decorated with Christian inscriptions, see E. L. Nitowski, *The Luchnaria Inscribed Lamps of the Byzantine Period* (Berrien Springs, Mich., 1986), and S. Loffreda, “The Greek Inscriptions on the Byzantine Lamps from the Holy Land,” in *Christian Archaeology in the Holy Land, New Discoveries*, ed. G. C. Bottini et al. (Jerusalem, 1990), 475–500. An unusual lamp bearing the Greek letters *A–N*, as well as a lamp with a Syrian inscription (*mprws*), were published by J. Naveh, “Lamp Inscriptions and Inverted Writing,” *IEJ* 38 (1988), 39, nos. 6, 7.

<sup>60</sup>J. Magness, *Jerusalem Ceramic Chronology* (Sheffield, 1993), 251–55, form 3—variants A–C.

<sup>61</sup>Smith, *Pella*, I, 217; R. H. Smith and L. P. Day, *Pella of the Decapolis*, II (Wooster, Ohio, 1989), 117.

<sup>62</sup>Zayadine, *Jerash*, I, 16. In the same excavation report, T. Scholl (“The Chronology of Jerash Lamps, a Preliminary Report,” *ibid.*, 163, group 1) argues that these lamps do not appear prior to the end of the 6th century C.E.—they were not found in 4th–5th-century C.E. contexts—and that they continue until the mid-7th century.

do not appear before the mid-fifth century C.E. and continue in existence through the end of the Byzantine period;<sup>63</sup> based on the finds from Pella and Bet Shean, this type continued into the Umayyad period.

*Type 4* (Figs. 21, 22). Of this type, an imitation of Beit Nattif lamps, two complete lamps and twenty-four fragments have been discovered at Bet Shean (Figs. 21, 22). The lamps are made from orange-light brown to dark brown clay. The nozzle is slightly concave on both sides and bears a decoration specific only to it: on one specimen, the design is an amphora from which two leaves issue; on the second lamp, the nozzle is decorated with a multispoked wheel. The rim of the lamp is generally decorated with a herringbone pattern, though a few isolated lamps are decorated with a radial design. The two complete specimens differ from each other in both size and decoration: one is 10.3 cm in length and is decorated with bunches of grapes; the other is 8.6 cm and is decorated with a herringbone pattern. Each of the lamps has a vertical handle ornamented with a branch. The base is undefined, except for one lamp with a small ring base.

Type 4 lamps are widespread only in northern Palestine, mainly in the Bet Shean valley, and in eastern Transjordan.<sup>64</sup> At Pella, these lamps are very common and were found only in tombs: seven lamps were discovered in tomb 5, which was dated by R. H. Smith to the fourth to sixth century C.E.; four lamps were discovered in tomb 6, dated to the same period; and two additional lamps were discovered in grave 6 of tomb 7, which also contained candlestick lamps.<sup>65</sup> Tomb 7 was dated by Smith to 525–600 C.E. This type parallels type 37 of Elgavish, dated to the mid-fourth century C.E.<sup>66</sup> The remaining lamps of this type have been published in private collections.<sup>67</sup>

The majority of the Bet Shean lamps were discovered in a room and open space nearby south of the rear wall of the nymphaeum (Loc. 54214, Loc. 54215) in the Byzantine occupation level. The lamps were found together with pottery, which included large quantities of complete specimens and fragments of the so-called Bet Shean juglets. The ceramic assemblage dates to the period between the mid-fifth and the beginning of the sixth century C.E. The numismatic evidence includes more than one hundred coins: the earliest dates to the mid-third century C.E., most are *minimi* from the fourth and fifth centuries, while the latest coin is Byzantine (512–539 C.E.). One of the complete lamps was discovered in a vomitorium north of the western entrance to the amphitheater (Loc. 242). This vomitorium was in use until the present century. The lamp and the pottery found with it—most of it from the fifth to thirteenth century C.E.—were mixed with soil and stones that filled the vomitorium. Two type 4 lamps were discovered by N. Zori in the House of Kyrios Leontis at Bet Shean and dated by him to the fifth to sixth century

<sup>63</sup> D. Barag and M. Hershkovitz, “Lamps from Masada,” in *Masada*, IV: *Final Reports* (Jerusalem, 1994), 103, nos. 204–6.

<sup>64</sup> V. Sussman, “Ornamental Figures on ‘Beit Nattif’ Type Oil Lamps from Northern and Southern Workshops,” *Israel—People and Land* 2–3 (1985–86), 67–68, type 5 (in Hebrew).

<sup>65</sup> Smith, *Pella*, I, 218–20, pl. 63:1037, 150, 151, 170, 169, 246; pl. 65:239, 255, 225, 253; pl. 66:390, 391.

<sup>66</sup> Elgavish, “Art,” I, 198.

<sup>67</sup> Kennedy, “Development,” 79, type 12, dated to the 4th–5th century C.E. Rosenthal and Sivan, *Schloesinger*, 104 f, 107, no. 439; the date of the lamp is that of the Beit Nattif lamp imitations. Israeli and Avida, *Warschaw*, 116.

C.E.<sup>68</sup> Based on the assemblage from Bet Shean, these lamps can be dated to the second half of the fifth and the sixth century C.E.

*Type 5* (Fig. 23). Only one type 5 lamp, of which the handle and a small part of the rim were preserved, was discovered at Bet Shean (Fig. 23). The lamp is made from light brown clay and is slipped in reddish-brown. The handle is cross-shaped,<sup>69</sup> and the rim is decorated with rows of dots set between two vertical ridges. The filling hole is surrounded by three ridges and a string of dots. Cross-shaped handles were also discovered in Samaria<sup>70</sup> and at Karm al-Sheikh.<sup>71</sup> A cross-shaped handle appears as well on candlestick lamps, which differ in both clay and decoration from the lamp under discussion. Such a lamp was discovered at Jerash and dated by the excavator to the fifth century C.E.<sup>72</sup> Two cross-shaped handles decorated with Greek inscriptions were published by S. Loffreda.<sup>73</sup>

This lamp fragment was discovered in the fill that blocked the western entrance to the amphitheater (Loc. 240). The numismatic finds include coins dating from the fourth century C.E. to the Byzantine-Umayyad period. The pottery assemblage is primarily Byzantine with some Umayyad ware. This lamp cannot be dated precisely on the basis of the context in which it was found, but because of its Christian nature a sixth-century C.E. date is proposed.

*Type 6* (Fig. 24). Of this type, only two handles were discovered at Bet Shean: one triangular and leaf-shaped, decorated with a carelessly executed branch; the other rounded and decorated with a cross composed of four triangles in high relief (Fig. 24). Behind the handle was a loop handle attached to the body of the lamp and used to carry it. The decorated handle served an ornamental purpose only. The lamps are made from orange-light brown clay.

An examination of the distribution pattern of the few published lamps of this type from Palestine points to an origin in and around Jerusalem: three such handles were found on the hill of the Ophel<sup>74</sup> and two in the Tyropoeon Valley,<sup>75</sup> one of them similar to the triangular handle from Bet Shean. A handle from the Armenian Garden was dated by A. D. Tushingham to the Byzantine IIIB period (the first quarter of the seventh century

<sup>68</sup>N. Zori, "The House of Kyrios Leontis at Beth-Shean," *Eretz-Israel* 11 (1973), 246 (in Hebrew).

<sup>69</sup>Clay lamps with a cross-shaped handle "imitate" bronze lamps; see, for example, Rosenthal and Sivan, *Schloessinger*, 161, no. 665.

<sup>70</sup>The Objects from Samaria, Samaria-Sebaste, III, ed. J. W. Crowfoot et al. (London, 1957), 376, fig. 89:6. No date is indicated.

<sup>71</sup>Baramki, "Karm al-Sheikh," 3–5, pl. xv:5. No specific date is indicated for this lamp.

<sup>72</sup>Clark, "Lamps," 253, 289, pl. XIV:2. A lamp of the candlestick type with a cross-shaped handle is dated to the 5th century C.E., while lamps of this type without a handle are dated to the 6th–7th century C.E. There are also several lamps in the Warschaw collection; see Israeli and Avida, *Warschaw*, nos. 408, 429–31.

<sup>73</sup>S. Loffreda, *Lucerne bizantine in Terra Santa con iscrizioni in greco* (Jerusalem, 1989), 141 f, types C 7.6, C 7.7.

<sup>74</sup>R. A. S. Macalister and J. G. Duncan, *Excavations on the Hill of the Ophel, Jerusalem, 1923–1925*, Palestine Exploration Fund 4 (London, 1926), 196, fig. 211.

<sup>75</sup>J. W. Crowfoot and G. M. Fitzgerald, *Excavations in the Tyropoeon Valley, Jerusalem, 1927*, Palestine Exploration Fund 5 (London, 1929), pl. XVI:33, 35.

C.E.);<sup>76</sup> examples from “Dominus Flevit” were dated by B. Bagatti and J. T. Milik to the Byzantine period;<sup>77</sup> at an agricultural farm near Jerusalem, a handle was found together with candlestick lamps;<sup>78</sup> and at Ramat Rahel they were dated to the sixth to seventh century C.E.<sup>79</sup> Some of the handles from Jerusalem were dated by Magness to the mid-sixth to the late seventh/early eighth century C.E.<sup>80</sup>

In eastern Transjordan, lamps of this type were discovered at Pella, Gadara, and Dibon. At Pella a complete lamp was discovered in a tomb dated by Smith to the fourth to sixth century C.E.; another handle was dated to the fifth to sixth century C.E.<sup>81</sup> At Gadara a handle of this type was dated to the early Byzantine period,<sup>82</sup> and at Dibon it was dated to the Byzantine period.<sup>83</sup> A handle at the British Museum that originated in Egypt was dated by D. M. Bailey to the sixth to seventh century C.E.<sup>84</sup>

One of the handles from Bet Shean was discovered near the nymphaeum, in a Mamluk stratum (Loc. 54429). The second handle was found in the foundation of the pavement of the Byzantine street that was repaired in the Umayyad period (Loc. 75524). The pottery is Byzantine-Umayyad, and the numismatic finds include coins dating from 575 C.E. to 696–750 C.E. Type 6 lamps cannot be dated on the basis of the Bet Shean excavations, but because of their Christian nature they may be dated to the sixth to the early seventh century C.E.

*Type 7 (Fig. 25).* Only one fragment of this type was found. The lamp is made from orange-brown clay and slipped in reddish-brown. The rim is ornamented with triangles, and the small vertical handle is decorated with lines (Fig. 25).

This type parallels type 8 at Capernaum.<sup>85</sup> At Hamat Gader, forty-three lamps of this type were discovered and dated to the mid-fifth to sixth century C.E.<sup>86</sup> At Khirbet el-Kiliya in Samaria a lamp of this type was dated to the sixth to seventh century C.E.,<sup>87</sup> and at Abila to the fourth to sixth century C.E.<sup>88</sup> This type is quite common at Gadara and

<sup>76</sup>A. D. Tushingham, *Excavations in Jerusalem, 1961–1967*, I (Toronto, 1985), 90, 97, fig. 32:40.

<sup>77</sup>B. Bagatti and J. T. Milik, *Gli scavi del “Dominus Flevit,”* part I: *La necropoli del periodo romano* (Jerusalem, 1958), 121, fig. 26:28–30.

<sup>78</sup>V. Tzaferis, “A Tower and Fortress near Jerusalem,” *IEJ* 24 (1974), 93, pl. 16:c. Lamps of the candlestick type are dated by Tzaferis to the 5th–6th century C.E. This handle, decorated with a person’s face, is not dated. A handle decorated with a person’s face was also found in Bet Shean, together with two other round handles decorated with a cross, in the recent excavations.

<sup>79</sup>Y. Aharoni, *Excavations at Ramat Rahel, Seasons 1961 and 1962* (Rome, 1964), 38–41, fig. 26:11–14. The lamps were discovered in stratum IIa, where lamps of the candlestick type and lamps with a conical handle (Umayyad type 3 lamp) were also found.

<sup>80</sup>Magness, *Jerusalem*, 251 f, 254 f, form 3—variant D.

<sup>81</sup>Smith, *Pella*, I, 217, pl. 29:313; ibid., 218, pl. 63:157; Smith and Day, *Pella*, II, 108, pl. 50:21.

<sup>82</sup>Nielsen et al., *Gadara*, III, 170, pl. 37:350.

<sup>83</sup>A. D. Tushingham, *The Excavations at Dibon (Dhiban) in Moab, AASOR* 40 (Cambridge, 1972), 158, fig. 13:78.

<sup>84</sup>D. M. Bailey, *A Catalogue of the Lamps in the British Museum*, III (London, 1988), 271, pl. 54:Q2245.

<sup>85</sup>S. Loffreda, *Cafarnao*, II: *La Ceramica* (Jerusalem, 1974), 94, 187. At Capernaum only one lamp fragment was discovered as well.

<sup>86</sup>Forthcoming; my thanks to Tania Cohen who informed me of this.

<sup>87</sup>Y. Magen, “A Roman Fortress and a Byzantine Monastery at Khirbet el-Kiliya,” in Bottini et al., *Christian Archaeology* (as above, note 59), 326, 329 (second row, middle lamp). It should be noted that the lamp from Khirbet el-Kiliya is identical to one of the lamps from Hamat Gader and may have been made in the same mold in the same workshop.

<sup>88</sup>W. H. Mare et al., “The 1984 Season at Abila of the Decapolis,” *AAJord* 29 (1985), 234, fig. 11:2.

was defined by da Costa as the “North Jordan type.”<sup>89</sup> It was dated by her to the late fifth to the early seventh century C.E. and by Nielsen to the late Byzantine period.<sup>90</sup>

The lamp fragment from Bet Shean was discovered in the rubble that covered the Umayyad shopping street following the earthquake of 749 C.E. After the earthquake this area fell into disuse; in this locus (Loc. 715), one of the collapsed arcades of the shops was discovered. The pottery assemblage is Byzantine-Abbasid, and the numismatic finds are Roman-Umayyad. The lamp cannot be dated on the basis of the Bet Shean excavations, but because of its clear Christian character a sixth–early-seventh-century C.E. date is proposed.

*Type 8 (Fig. 26).* Lamps of this type are included with those defined as Samaritan lamps.<sup>91</sup> Of the lamps discovered at Bet Shean—four complete lamps and four fragments—two were manufactured in the same mold (Fig. 26). The lamps are made from yellowish, light brown, or gray clay. One lamp is decorated with vegetal designs including stylized leaves and flowers; the others are decorated with geometric patterns composed of lines, half-circles, and concentric circles. On some of the lamps the rim is divided into two by a ridge; the upper area is decorated with triangles and dots, and the lower contains a linear design. One lamp is decorated with a ladder design on either side of the nozzle.<sup>92</sup> The filling hole is sometimes surrounded with a pronounced ridge. The filling hole of one lamp was formed by breaking the discus after firing.<sup>93</sup> There is a clear channel along the nozzle on only one lamp; no channel is defined on the other lamps. On a few of the lamps the nozzle is slightly concave on both sides. All the lamps have a horizontal handle, sometimes rectangular and sometimes ending in a point. The base is a small ring base, at times slightly sunken.

Lamps of this type were discovered at Kefar ‘Ara and dated by Sussman to the fourth to sixth century C.E.<sup>94</sup> Forty lamps were also discovered at Silet edh-Dhahr and dated by Sellers and Baramki to the fourth to sixth century C.E.<sup>95</sup> Several lamps were found at Apollonia-Arsuf,<sup>96</sup> in Samaria,<sup>97</sup> and at Kibbutz Mesillot.<sup>98</sup>

At Bet Shean, majority of these lamps were discovered in the amphitheater and the Byzantine street adjacent to it, but not in stratigraphic contexts that can date them precisely. One complete lamp does come from a context that can help in dating type 8 lamps:

<sup>89</sup> Da Costa, “Umm Qeis,” 335 f, fig. 8:7.

<sup>90</sup> Nielsen et al., *Gadara*, III, 170, pl. 36:344, 346.

<sup>91</sup> See above, note 39.

<sup>92</sup> Sussman, “Kefar ‘Ara,” 98. The ladder design is very characteristic of these lamps. The division of the rim into rows is a decorative style that also appears later in Umayyad-period type 3 lamps.

<sup>93</sup> This characteristic is also typical of Samaritan lamps from the 4th century C.E. See above, late Roman lamps, type 9. A lamp of this type was published by Kennedy, “Development,” 90 f, pl. xxix:796. In this lamp the filling hole is left closed. This lamp originated in the Jordan Valley. Lamps of this type (Kennedy’s type 24) were dated by him to the 7th–9th century C.E.

<sup>94</sup> Sussman, “Kefar ‘Ara,” 98, group B.

<sup>95</sup> Sellers and Baramki, “Cave,” 43 f, type XIII. Of the forty lamps discovered in this cave, only two were made in the same mold.

<sup>96</sup> Sussman, “Apollonia,” 73 f, types 2, 3.

<sup>97</sup> Crowfoot et al., *Samaria*, III, 376, fig. 82:2.

<sup>98</sup> Arav, “Mesillot,” 86, nos. 13, 15. It should be noted that many lamps similar to the type under discussion were discovered at Gezer, but they differ in the shape of the handle; see R. A. S. Macalister, *The Excavation of Gezer*, III (London, 1912), pl. LXIX:3, pl. LXXII:2–10, pl. XCII:1–9, 14, 15, pl. XCII:14, pl. XCVII:1, 5.

the lamp was discovered in a room built in the central apse of the Monument of Antonius (Loc. 64569). A lamp made in the same mold was discovered in the residential quarter established on the Byzantine street adjacent to the amphitheater. The former specimen was found beneath the stone pavement of the room; four coins were also discovered in the same level: a coin from the fourth century C.E. and three K coins of Justin II (565–578 C.E.). (K represents a coin of 20 nummi.) These lamps can therefore be probably dated to the sixth century C.E., and perhaps more specifically to the second half of that century.

*Type 9* (Figs. 27, 28). Lamps of this type can be defined as the last remnant of Beit Nattif imitations. The nozzle is still slightly concave on both sides but less clumsy than type 4 lamps: it is straight-edged, almost rectangular in shape, and is not high as in type 4 lamps (Fig. 27). The lamps are made from light brown clay, and most are slipped with reddish-brown slip. The majority of the lamps are decorated with simple geometric patterns including ridges, rows of dots, and triangles. Several lamps are decorated with vegetal designs—bunches of grapes and beautiful foliated guilloches.

Several of the lamps preserve the nozzle decoration characteristic of Beit Nattif lamps (a five-branched menorah and a palm tree with hanging branches) but have a different rim decoration—bunches of grapes. An additional lamp of which only the nozzle is preserved was decorated with a woman's face (Fig. 28). On the rest of the lamps the decoration of the nozzle is part of the decoration of the lamp as a whole.

Every lamp except one has a conical handle. The exceptional lamp has a loop handle that was not preserved. In most of the lamps the base is not defined, but one lamp does have a small ring base.

These lamps are widespread only in northern Palestine and eastern Transjordan: type 9 lamps are among those discovered in the hoard in catacomb 24 at Beth She'arim.<sup>99</sup> In this catacomb, some five hundred complete lamps and hundreds of lamp fragments were discovered, including sixty lamps of the type under discussion. B. Mazar dated this type to the third to fourth century C.E.,<sup>100</sup> whereas Elgavish, on the basis of the numismatic record, believes the lamp assemblage in this catacomb should be assigned to the second half of the sixth century C.E.<sup>101</sup> At Silet edh-Dhahr they were dated by Sellers and Baramki to the fourth or the beginning of the fifth century C.E.<sup>102</sup> At el-Jish the tomb is dated by N. M. Makhoul to the fourth to fifth century C.E.<sup>103</sup> This type parallels type 6 at Capernaum, the most common type there, dated by Loffreda to the Byzantine period (450–638 C.E.).<sup>104</sup> Lamps of this type, with several wick holes, were discovered in the

<sup>99</sup>This hoard was discovered in the excavations of B. Mazar. The finds from this catacomb were not published, but a discussion of the different types of lamps discovered there can be found in Elgavish, "Art," II, 56–58. The type under discussion parallels his type 57.

<sup>100</sup>B. Mazar, *Beth She'arim*, I (Jerusalem, 1957), 213, fig. 23:3. Mazar's date appears to be too early; the chronology of Barag ("Glass," II, 63, for his discussion of the finds in the tomb at el-Jish), who dates them to the 6th century C.E., is more acceptable.

<sup>101</sup>Elgavish, "Art," I, 215.

<sup>102</sup>Sellers and Baramki, "Cave," 40, type VIII. All the lamps have a loop handle. The Bet Shean specimens are particularly close to no. 63.

<sup>103</sup>N. M. Makhoul, "Rock-Cut Tomb at el Jish," *QDAP* 8 (1938), 46. According to Barag ("Glass," I, 63 f, for his discussion of this tomb in general, and *ibid.*, II, 63, for his discussion of these lamps), the lamps in pl. xx:1b, c should be dated to the 6th century C.E.

<sup>104</sup>Loffreda, *Cafarnaou*, II, 94, 187.

church at Khirbet al-Karak from the end of the Byzantine period.<sup>105</sup> A lamp of this type was discovered at Pella and dated by Smith to the fourth century C.E.<sup>106</sup>

The lamps found through 1991 at Bet Shean—two complete lamps and fourteen fragments of different sizes—were not discovered in clear stratigraphy that would allow them to be dated, but in the 1992/93 season three complete lamps and three fragments were discovered together with a complete candlestick lamp (type 3) near the vault entrance adjacent to the basilica (Loc. 95701) in a layer of alluvium. Byzantine pottery and seven coins were found with the lamps: a late Roman coin, three *minimi*, a coin of Anastasius I from 498–512 C.E., a coin of Justin II from 567 C.E., and one unidentified coin. On the basis of the finds from Bet Shean and Beth She'arim, the lamps should be dated to the second half of the sixth century C.E.; based on the finds from Khirbet al-Karak, however, they may have continued in existence until the end of the Byzantine period.

*Type 10* (Fig. 29). Of this type, two fragments differing from each other in ornamentation and clay were discovered. One lamp is made from reddish-dark brown clay; the rim is decorated with a vegetal design in high relief. A ridge, which extends to the wick hole and forms a channel, separates the rim from the small, slightly sunken discus. The discus is decorated with a cross composed of four triangles in high relief. The small pyramidal handle actually constitutes part of the ridge (Fig. 29). The second lamp fragment is made from light brown clay. The rim is decorated with beautiful, well-made rhombi. The discus is slightly sunken and undecorated; around the small filling hole are three ridges. The junction of upper and lower halves is covered with a layer of clay.

This type is widespread in northern Palestine and Lebanon as well as Cyprus.<sup>107</sup> Type 10 lamps were discovered in a tomb at el Bassa, from which they take their name. This tomb was dated by J. H. Iliffe to 396 C.E.,<sup>108</sup> but today it is generally accepted that this date is too early.<sup>109</sup> In the hoard from catacomb 24 at Beth She'arim, 175 lamps of this type were discovered.<sup>110</sup> Elgavish dated the assemblage of lamps from this catacomb to the second half of the sixth century C.E.<sup>111</sup> A lamp of this type was also discovered in Avigad's excavations at Beth She'arim and dated to the late sixth to the beginning of the seventh century C.E.<sup>112</sup> A special and unusual fragment was discovered on the coast at Caesarea. This lamp is decorated with impressed coins from the years 610–650 C.E.<sup>113</sup> Type 10 parallels type 8 of Sussman, which she dates to the sixth or the beginning of the seventh century C.E.<sup>114</sup>

<sup>105</sup> P. Delougaz and R. C. Haines, *A Byzantine Church at Khirbat al-Karak* (Chicago, 1960), pl. 44:1–5. These lamps, like the rest, were not discovered in a clear stratigraphic context. After the Muslim conquest a structure was built inside the church. For the date and different phases of the church, see *ibid.*, 56–59.

<sup>106</sup> Smith, *Pella*, I, 218, pl. 63:186. This lamp was discovered in tomb 5 dated to the 4th–6th century C.E.

<sup>107</sup> Rosenthal and Sivan, *Schloessinger*, 123. The Bet Shean lamps parallel nos. 510–11; see also the consideration of the date and the bibliography for this type.

<sup>108</sup> J. H. Iliffe, "A Tomb at el Bassa of c. A.D. 396," *QDAP* 3 (1934), 81–91, figs. 4, 15, 16.

<sup>109</sup> Barag, "Glass," I, 72.

<sup>110</sup> See above, note 99. The type under discussion parallels type 58.

<sup>111</sup> Elgavish, "Art," I, 216.

<sup>112</sup> Avigad, *Beth She'arim*, III, 190–92. The lamps from Bet Shean parallel no. 42, which belongs to Avigad's subtype c.

<sup>113</sup> A. Kindler, "A Seventh Century Lamp with Coin Decoration," *IEJ* 8 (1958), 106–9.

<sup>114</sup> V. Sussman, "Northern Stamped Oil Lamps and Their Typology," *Michmanim* 4 (1989), 54. The Bet Shean lamps parallel no. 75.

The two Bet Shean lamps were not found in clear stratigraphy that would allow them to be dated; one may suggest the late sixth to seventh century C.E. as an acceptable range.

*Type 11 (Fig. 30).* Lamps of this type are wheel-made in an era when nearly all lamps were mold-made, with the exception of one early Roman type. (In the tenth century C.E., wheel-made lamps were once again produced, but they were of a different type.) These lamps are widespread only in southern Palestine, with a few examples published from the north.<sup>115</sup> This type is widespread in Aqaba, where it was dated to the late Byzantine period.<sup>116</sup>

At Bet Shean, two lamps were discovered from which the base and a small part of the body are preserved.<sup>117</sup> The lamps are made from reddish-dark brown clay. One lamp has a ribbed body, while the other is smooth (Fig. 30).

One lamp was discovered in a room near the nymphaeum in the occupation level dating to the Mamluk period and under the debris of one of its walls (Loc. 54409). The second lamp comes from a layer of fill under the pavement of a room near the Umayyad shopping street (Loc. 75575), and was found together with Byzantine pottery, seven coins from the fifth century C.E., and one coin from 500–640 C.E. In the 1993/94 season an almost complete lamp was discovered on the floor of a Umayyad building that was constructed on Roman vaults (Loc. 05574); Umayyad pottery was found with it. These lamps, which reflect Sasanian influence, were dated by D. Barag and M. Hershkovitz to the late Byzantine period (late 6th–early 7th century C.E.),<sup>118</sup> but on the basis of the finds from Bet Shean it appears that they also continued into the Umayyad period.

#### *Byzantine-Umayyad Period*

*Type 1 (Figs. 31–33).* Lamps of this type were defined as Samaritan lamps.<sup>119</sup> At Bet Shean, five complete lamps and twenty-nine fragments were discovered. The lamps are made from yellowish to dark brown clay; several lamps are made from gray clay (Fig. 31). Type 1 lamps differ from type 2 lamps in the shape of the filling hole: type 1 lamps have a round filling hole, whereas in type 2 lamps it is horseshoe-shaped.

The entire surface of the lamp is decorated, with the exception of the channel along the nozzle, which in the majority of lamps is unornamented. The way in which the surface area is divided is fixed in all the lamps, with the change in decoration occurring at the back of the lamp near the handle. The rim is decorated in herringbone pattern on both sides of the channel. This decoration is edged by a row of dots or lines at the lamp's midsection, and from there another decoration begins, composed of a net pattern, stylized flowers, a wheel design, or radial decoration. The ornamentation is symmetrical.

Two of these lamps are unusual in their ornamentation. One is decorated entirely with vegetal ornamentation composed of a branch with leaves. Near its wick hole are

<sup>115</sup> Rosenthal and Sivan, *Schloessinger*, 122 f. A lamp with twelve wick holes, discovered at tel Mefallsim, was published by L. Y. Rahmani, "Finds from a Sixth to Seventh Centuries Site near Gaza, II, Pottery and Stone Objects," *IEJ* 33 (1983), fig. 1:2.

<sup>116</sup> D. Whitcomb, *Ayla: Art and Industry in the Islamic Port of Aqaba* (Chicago, 1994), 25 f, lamp b.

<sup>117</sup> A lamp of this type was also published by Fitzgerald, *Excavations*, pl. xxxvi:25.

<sup>118</sup> Barag and Hershkovitz, "Masada," 103 f, nos. 207–8.

<sup>119</sup> See above, note 39.

bunches of grapes (Fig. 32). The second lamp, of which only half was preserved, is ornamented with an object resembling an eleven-branched menorah, which appears on either side of the lamp (Fig. 33). Opposite the horizontal handle is an additional object resembling a menorah standing on a rectangle decorated with net design. It is not clear how many branches this menorah has, as part of the handle is broken. The lamp is biconical in section, and a thick pronounced ridge surrounds the filling hole.

In all the lamps except one, the channel is undecorated. The exceptional channel is decorated with a zigzag line. One lamp does not have a channel, its place defined by three lines. Most of the lamps were found with broken handles. Several lamps have a small horizontal handle. In two lamps, most of the handle was preserved—a raised handle that curves above the lamp, probably the reason it is usually not preserved. Three types of bases are characteristic of these lamps: an undefined base, a base whose shape follows the outline of the lamp, and a base that, with a pronounced ridge, “imitates” the upper part of the lamp with the filling hole and the channel.

Lamps of this type were discovered at Kefar ‘Ara and dated by Sussman to the end of the Byzantine period, with several lamps continuing, in her opinion, with a few changes, to the beginning of the Umayyad period.<sup>120</sup> At Apollonia-Arsuf, these lamps were dated by Sussman to the fifth to seventh century C.E., continuing to the beginning of the early Islamic period.<sup>121</sup> Several lamps of this type were discovered in Samaria: G. Reisner dated them to the Byzantine period,<sup>122</sup> whereas J. W. Crowfoot is of the opinion that these lamps begin to appear in the third to fourth century C.E. and continue into the Islamic period.<sup>123</sup>

Three lamps of this type were discovered at Pella: two were found in a Byzantine stratum dated by Smith to the sixth to seventh century C.E., and the third was discovered in tomb 7, which was in use between 521/2 and the end of the seventh century C.E.<sup>124</sup> According to Smith, this lamp is the latest in this tomb and is generally dated to the seventh century C.E., although the type continues in existence, in his opinion, for approximately another fifty years after the Muslim conquest. A lamp of this type discovered at Anab Safina in Syria was dated there from the end of the sixth to the end of the eighth century C.E.<sup>125</sup>

Two lamps of this type found in the Schloessinger collection were dated by Rosenthal and Sivan to the seventh to eighth century C.E.<sup>126</sup> Lamps of this type are also found in

<sup>120</sup>Sussman, “Kefar ‘Ara,” 98, group C.

<sup>121</sup>Eadem, “Apollonia,” 85, type 4. The Bet Shean lamps parallel no. 90. In nos. 91–93 the filling holes were formed by breaking the discus after firing.

<sup>122</sup>G. Reisner et al., *Harvard Excavations at Samaria* (Cambridge, Mass., 1924), 324 f.

<sup>123</sup>Crowfoot et al., *Samaria*, III, 376.

<sup>124</sup>Smith, *Pella*, I, 218, pl. 44:171, 503; ibid., 220, pl. 67:191.

<sup>125</sup>I. Modrzewska-Marciniak, “Lampes d’Anab Safina (Syrie): L’étude typologique et chronologique,” *Archeologia* 28 (1977), 144–46 (in Polish). This lamp is categorized as type v, which also included elongated lamps with a conical handle (these lamps are considered below in the discussion on Umayyad lamps, type 3). Finding a lamp of this type in Syria is important for two reasons: (a) in Palestine it is common in a very limited area (see above, note 120); (b) Syrian lamps have gone almost completely undiscovered in Palestine, except for a Byzantine type 1 lamp fragment discovered at Bet Shean (see below, imported lamps), which is apparently the only example found in excavations in Palestine. Of course, these two lamps should be treated as chance finds that are not indicative of trade connections.

<sup>126</sup>Rosenthal and Sivan, *Schloessinger*, 137, nos. 572, 573.

the Warschaw collection and dated by Israeli and Avida to the Byzantine period, but they continue into the early Islamic period.<sup>127</sup>

The majority of complete lamps discovered at Bet Shean were found in and around the amphitheater. The earliest examples were discovered beneath the floor of a room (Loc. 105) together with a “hoard” of thirty-three Byzantine coins wrapped in cloth. The coins date to the reigns of Justin I (518–527 C.E.), Justinian I (527–565 C.E.), and Justin II (565–578 C.E.). The latest lamp was discovered in a sounding adjacent to a wall erected on the Umayyad street near the Roman basilica (Loc. 535). Sixty coins were discovered here as well: the earliest is Roman, the latest (35 coins) are Umayyad. On the basis of the finds from Bet Shean, these lamps apparently first appear in the sixth century C.E. (the late Byzantine period) and continue into the Umayyad period.

*Type 2 (Fig. 34).* Lamps of this type are characterized, as noted above, by a horseshoe-shaped filling hole. Unlike type 1 lamps, the channel along the nozzle in most lamps is ornamented with different designs: wheel, net, ridges, or unidentified patterns. In a few of the lamps the channel was left undecorated (Fig. 34). The lamps are made from light brown or gray clay, and their firing is very good. These lamps have a curved horizontal handle or a small “tongue” handle. In ornamentation and shape of the base these lamps do not differ from the previous type, but they are less prevalent: four complete lamps and ten fragments were discovered.

Lamps of this type were discovered at Kefar ‘Ara and, like the previous type, were identified by Sussman as Samaritan lamps.<sup>128</sup> She dated this type to the early Islamic period, from the seventh century C.E. onward. At Beth She’arim a lamp of this type was dated by Avigad to about the end of the seventh century C.E.<sup>129</sup> A lamp of this type was also discovered in the Umayyad citadel at Amman.<sup>130</sup>

Two type 2 lamps are found in the Schloessinger collection and dated by Rosenthal and Sivan to the seventh to eighth century C.E.<sup>131</sup> A lamp of this type bearing a Samaritan inscription—נַר תְמָךְ (“perpetual lamp”)—was published by L. A. Mayer and A. Reifenberg.<sup>132</sup>

All the type 2 lamps from Bet Shean, except for one fragment, were discovered in the amphitheater in loci from the Byzantine-Umayyad period. The fact that these lamps differ from the previous type in the shape of the filling hole does not conclusively indicate a chronological gap, and they apparently can be dated, like the previous type, to the sixth century C.E. (the late Byzantine period) and continue into the Umayyad period.

*Type 3 (Fig. 35).* This type can be seen as a variant of type 2. One complete lamp and two fragments were discovered at Bet Shean. The complete lamp is especially large, 13 cm in length and 4.9 cm in height. It is also heavier relative to other lamps (Fig. 35). The lamp is boat-shaped; the rim is broad and oblique. The channel along the nozzle is tri-

<sup>127</sup> Israeli and Avida, *Warschaw*, 136, nos. 405, 406, 439.

<sup>128</sup> Sussman, “Kefar ‘Ara,” 98, group D.

<sup>129</sup> Avigad, *Beth She’arim*, III, 193, pl. LXXI:45.

<sup>130</sup> G. L. Harding, “Excavations on the Citadel, ‘Amman,” *AAJord* 1 (1951), 11, pl. III:35.

<sup>131</sup> Rosenthal and Sivan, *Schloessinger*, 131, nos. 570, 571.

<sup>132</sup> L. A. Mayer and A. Reifenberg, “A Samaritan Lamp,” *JPOS* 16 (1936), 44–45. See also Naveh, “Lamp,” 37, no. 1.

angular and takes up most of the surface of the lamp. The filling hole is small and horseshoe-shaped. The base of the lamp follows the lamp's outline. The lamp is made from red-brown clay. The junction of the two parts of the lamp is covered with a layer of clay one centimeter wide that encircles the lamp all around and serves to create a small "tongue" handle. This handle is very small relative to the size of the lamp. The channel is decorated with three dots and a half-circle—a very schematic depiction of a person's face. The wick hole is very sooty, indicating extensive use. The only parallels to this lamp are two lamps in the Schloessinger collection.<sup>133</sup>

The complete lamp from Bet Shean was discovered in the entrance to the vaults under the temple (Loc. 1004); the two fragments were discovered in the western vault (Loc. 54234).<sup>134</sup> These vaults were in use until the beginning of this century. The ceramic finds from these vaults date from the Roman through the Mamluk period. These lamps cannot be dated precisely on the basis of the Bet Shean excavations. However, on the basis of their considerable resemblance to the previous type, they may be assigned the same date as the type 2 lamps, sixth century C.E. to the Umayyad period.

*Type 4 (Fig. 36).* One almost complete lamp of this type was discovered. Unusual in shape, the lamp is triangular, and its rounded nozzle constitutes one of its angles (Fig. 36). The lamp is made from light brown clay with many black grits. The wick hole is sooty, indicating use. The filling hole is very small relative to its size. The entire surface of the lamp is ornamented in a net pattern. There is no channel between the wick hole and the filling hole, but several ridges appear in its place. The base is triangular, and its shape follows the outline of the lamp. The handle is missing, but the manner in which it was broken suggests that it was probably a "tongue" handle. No parallel is found for this lamp at other sites.

The Bet Shean lamp was discovered in a building west of the temple square (Loc. 65012), in the earliest stratum of this building, dated by the excavator to the end of the Byzantine-Umayyad period. The numismatic record included coins dating from the Roman through the Umayyad period. As it is impossible to suggest a more exact date, this lamp is proposed to be a transitional Byzantine-Umayyad type.

#### *Umayyad Period*

*Type 1 (Figs. 37–40).* This is the only type of lamp in which the name of the city where it was made and the date of production appear on a few examples. This fact points to the city of Jerash as a center of production for these lamps.<sup>135</sup> A single complete specimen and seventy-nine fragments were found in the kilns discovered near the hippodrome at Jerash.<sup>136</sup> A lamp mold was also found in the hippodrome.<sup>137</sup>

<sup>133</sup> Rosenthal and Sivan, *Schloessinger*, 144, nos. 588, 589. The Bet Shean lamp is close to no. 589.

<sup>134</sup> Tsafrir and Foerster, "Bet Shean—1988/1989," 125 f.

<sup>135</sup> A. J. 'Amr, "More Islamic Inscribed Pottery Lamps from Jordan," *Berytus* 34 (1986), 162.

<sup>136</sup> R. Abu Dalu, "Final Report of the Excavations in the Area of the Pottery Kilns—Jarash 1991," *AAJord* 37 (1993), 23–34 (in Arabic). See also R. Pierobon, "Sanctuary of Artemis: Soundings in the Temple-Terrace, 1978–1980," *Mesopotamia* 18–19 (1983–84), 95–97, and J. Schaefer, "An Umayyad Potters' Complex in the North Theatre, Jerash," in Zayadine, *Jerash*, I, 431.

<sup>137</sup> I. Kehrberg, "Selected Lamps and Pottery from the Hippodrome at Jerash," *Syria* 66 (1989), 88 f, fig. 4:23.

At Bet Shean one complete lamp and nine fragments were discovered. The lamps are made from reddish-brown clay. The complete lamp is made from brown clay that adopted gray toning after firing. The ornamentation on these lamps is uniform: the rim is most often decorated with a radial design and sometimes with triangles filled with lines. The complete lamp is decorated in a slightly different way: a long branch runs alongside and parallel to the radial decoration, while two branches and geometric decorations appear on either side of the handle. All the decorations are small and very delicate (Fig. 37).

These lamps appear both with and without a channel between the filling hole and the wick hole. When there is no channel, its place is taken by a permanent decoration—three lines, of which the outer two are rounded at one end. The handle of these lamps—a high handle ending with an undefined zoomorphic head—is their identification mark. The handle is ornamented sometimes with a cross and sometimes with a decoration identical to that which replaces the absent channel on the nozzle (Figs. 38, 39). The only base preserved at Bet Shean is a small ring base decorated with two pairs of volutes. Sometimes the base is decorated with four pairs of volutes (cross?).<sup>138</sup>

In addition to lamps, a mold used in the preparation of this type of lamp was also found at Bet Shean (Fig. 40). The mold is made from red-brown clay. The rim is decorated with a radial design. The handle is broad and decorated with a linear design on the upper part and a cross below it. A similar mold was discovered at Jerash in the Church of Bishop Marianos.<sup>139</sup>

Lamps of this type were first published by Ch. Clermont-Ganneau. F. Day discusses them again in her article on early Islamic and Christian lamps. Day assigned all types of Jerash lamps to the Umayyad period.<sup>140</sup> According to F. Zayadine, however, these lamps appear at Jerash in the sixth century C.E. and continue into the Umayyad period.<sup>141</sup>

In the same excavation report on Jerash, an attempt was made to determine a chronology of the different lamp types found in the excavations there. Groups II–V are relevant to this discussion. The mold parallels group II, characterized by lamps with a high, curved handle (“tongue” handle). This group was dated by T. Scholl to the second half of the seventh century C.E., but may have already been in use at the end of the sixth.<sup>142</sup> The lamp whose handle is decorated with a cross parallels group III, one of the common groups at Jerash. This group was dated by Scholl from the end of the first half of the seventh century C.E. to the mid-eighth century.<sup>143</sup> The other Bet Shean lamps, whose handles end with zoomorphic heads but without a cross, parallel group IV, subgroup 2, dated by Scholl to the second half of the seventh century C.E.<sup>144</sup> The complete lamp parallels group V, dated by Scholl to the end of the first half of the eighth century C.E., with a

<sup>138</sup> Another type of base is the flat base following the outline of the lamp. The three base types can be seen in F. Day, “Early Islamic and Christian Lamps,” *Berytus* 7 (1942), 64–79, pls. XIII, XIV. At Qasr Hallabat a lamp whose base is decorated with an amphora containing fish was discovered and published by G. Bisheh, “The Second Season of Excavations at Hallabat, 1980, I,” *AAJord* 26 (1982), 134–36.

<sup>139</sup> M. Gawlikowski and A. Musa, “The Church of Bishop Marianos,” in Zayadine, *Jerash*, I, 147, no. 14.

<sup>140</sup> Day, “Islamic,” 77–79.

<sup>141</sup> Zayadine, *Jerash*, I, 16.

<sup>142</sup> Scholl, “Chronology,” 160, 163, pl. V:B. Lamps of this group were found together with Byzantine pottery and Byzantine coins as well as Byzantine-Umayyad coins and Umayyad coins.

<sup>143</sup> Scholl, “Chronology,” 163.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., 163–65.

few specimens continuing into the second half.<sup>145</sup> The latest excavations at Jerash indicate, according to I. Kehrberg, that lamps with zoomorphic handles appear equally in assemblages of the sixth century C.E. and those of the first half of the eighth century. The lamps parallel to group III of Scholl can be dated, in Kehrberg's opinion, to the period between the end of the sixth and the first half of the eighth century C.E.<sup>146</sup>

Lamps of this type were also found at Pella. A complete lamp discovered in tomb 7 was dated by Smith to the seventh century C.E., probably before 675 C.E.<sup>147</sup> In the Umayyad period these lamps were widespread at Pella, and were dated by him to the early years of the eighth century C.E.<sup>148</sup> He dated two other lamps to the first quarter of the eighth century C.E.<sup>149</sup> Lamps of this type were also discovered in the Umayyad citadel at Amman, one of them from the earthquake destruction level.<sup>150</sup> Several lamps bearing the name of Jerash as their place of production were discovered at Qasr Hallabat in the eastern desert of Jordan, which, according to A. J. 'Amr, indicates that trade in these lamps was not limited to the borders of Jerash.<sup>151</sup>

Lamps of this type were also discovered at Buṣra in the Hauran in the Umayyad stratum that was destroyed in the earthquake of 749 C.E.<sup>152</sup> In Palestine these lamps are rare and have been discovered at el Bassa,<sup>153</sup> Ḥamat Gader,<sup>154</sup> and Capernaum.<sup>155</sup>

A lamp of this type is found in both the Schloessinger and Warschaw collections.<sup>156</sup> Two examples bearing Greek inscriptions were published by Loffreda.<sup>157</sup> Several lamps decorated with special ornamentation were published by Bagatti.<sup>158</sup>

The Bet Shean lamp whose handle is decorated with a cross was discovered in the drainage channel of Palladius Street (Loc. 1013) together with Byzantine and Umayyad pottery, two Umayyad-period type 2 lamp fragments, and thirty-one coins from the late Roman to the Umayyad period. The mold was discovered in a fill of soil and stones in a room near the basilica (Loc. 565), close to another room that, in the Umayyad period, housed a kiln (Loc. 64023). The numismatic finds in this locus include six coins: two Byzantine, one Byzantine-Umayyad, one Umayyad, and two unidentifiable. The pottery is Byzantine and Umayyad. The only complete lamp (after restoration) from Bet Shean was discovered on the floor of a shop (Loc. 54159) near its entrance. This shop was one among the row on the Umayyad shopping street that was built in 738 C.E., destroyed in the earthquake of January 749 C.E., and never reconstructed.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., 165.

<sup>146</sup> Kehrberg, "Hippodrome," 88 f.

<sup>147</sup> Smith, *Pella*, I, 220.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., 232 f.

<sup>149</sup> Smith and Day, *Pella*, II, 114, pl. 55:6, pl. 60:1, 3.

<sup>150</sup> Harding, "Citadel," 11; A. Northedge, *Studies on Roman and Islamic 'Amman*, I (Oxford, 1992), 143, fig. 133:7.

<sup>151</sup> 'Amr, "Inscribed Pottery Lamps," 162.

<sup>152</sup> J. Wilson and M. Sa'd, "The Domestic Material Culture of Nabataean to Umayyad Period Buṣrā," *Berytus* 32 (1984), 63, figs. 22–25. It is of note that the pottery discovered there is identical to pottery found in Jordan and northern Palestine (including Bet Shean).

<sup>153</sup> Iliffe, "Tomb at el Bassa," fig. 2.

<sup>154</sup> The report on Ḥamat Gader is forthcoming.

<sup>155</sup> B. Bagatti, "Oggetti inediti di Cafarnao," *Lib. ann.* 14 (1963–64), 267–70, fig. 3:5.

<sup>156</sup> Rosenthal and Sivan, *Schloessinger*, 139; Israeli and Avida, *Warschaw*, 156, no. 438.

<sup>157</sup> Loffreda, *Iscrizioni*, 106 f, 130 f.

<sup>158</sup> B. Bagatti, "Lucerne fittili a testa di cavallo in Palestina," *RACr* 46 (1970), figs. 1, 2.

In the recent excavations at Bet Shean, one complete lamp and one fragment of this type were found in two Byzantine shops (Loc. 44561, Loc. 44566), together with twenty-one complete lamps and fragments of lamps of Byzantine-period types 4 and 9, Byzantine pottery (including two anthropomorphic jugs identical to one found in Jerash), and *minimi* from the fourth to fifth century C.E. Based on these finds, type 1 lamps first appeared in Bet Shean, as in Jerash and el Bassa, in the sixth or maybe even fifth century C.E. The *terminus ante quem* for the usage of these lamps can be fixed on the basis of the complete lamp found in the last occupation level of the shop. The absence of soot around the wick hole indicates that this lamp was not even used.

In Jordan and in the Hauran, these lamps continued for many years. At Pella<sup>159</sup> and Buṣra,<sup>160</sup> these lamps also continued to exist at the beginning of the Abbasid period (from the second half of the 8th to the beginning of the 9th century C.E.). The latest inscribed lamp published is from A.H. 211 (826 C.E.).<sup>161</sup>

The very limited distribution of type 1 lamps in Palestine, in contrast to their wide distribution in Jordan, indicates that this type was not in demand in Palestine, whose inhabitants preferred the lamp with the conical handle (type 3). The finding of the lamp mold and the absence of any lamp made from this mold at Bet Shean do not clarify the picture. It may have been used to prepare lamps for export only and not for local production, although it is just as likely that it was not used at all.

*Type 2 (Figs. 41, 42).* This type, common only in northern Palestine,<sup>162</sup> is relatively widespread at Bet Shean. Thus far four complete lamps and fifty-nine fragments of different sizes have been discovered. Most of the lamps are made from light brown clay, and the majority are red-slipped. One lamp is made from gray clay and is not slipped (Fig. 41). The type 2 lamp is an elongated almond-shaped lamp characterized by a relatively thick rim, and consequently is quite heavy relative to its size. It has either a small knob handle or a small triangular handle. Each lamp has a very large filling hole formed when the lamp was prepared and not by breaking the discus after firing.

Most of the lamps are decorated with stylized vegetal designs—either alternating flowers and leaves (the more common ornamentation) or leaves that decorate the entire surface of the lamp. These lamps were made in different-sized molds with identical ornamentation. Other lamps are decorated with geometric patterns: wheels, decorated circles, radial designs, and rhombus decoration that ornaments the entire surface of the lamp. One lamp, from which only a rim fragment was preserved, was decorated with peacocks walking in a line (Fig. 42).<sup>163</sup>

Type 2 lamps have a clear channel between the filling hole and the wick hole, most

<sup>159</sup>A. G. Walmsley et al., "The Eleventh and Twelfth Seasons of Excavations at Pella (Tabaqat Fah̄l), 1989–1990," *AAJord* 37 (1993), 227–31, type 1.

<sup>160</sup>S. Berthier, "Sondage dans le secteur des Thermes Sud à Buṣrā (Syrie) 1985," *Berytus* 33 (1985), 11 f, pl. 2.

<sup>161</sup>N. I. Khairy and A. J. 'Amr, "Early Islamic Inscribed Pottery Lamps from Jordan," *Levant* 18 (1986), 150, no. 12.

<sup>162</sup>Avigad, *Beth She'arim*, III, 190–92, pl. LXXI:37–40.

<sup>163</sup>On the peacock decoration on clay lamps, see Sussman, "Figures," 69–72. This decoration also appears on one of the el Bassa lamps; see Iliffe, "Tomb at el Bassa," fig. 3. On peacock-shaped bronze lamps, see M. C. Ross, "Byzantine Bronze Peacock Lamps," *Archaeology* 13 (1960), 134–36, who also discusses the meaning of the peacock in Christian art.

often decorated with a rope design, but sometimes decorated with a branch. One channel bears a fish, a decoration that appears to be very suitable to this part of the lamp.<sup>164</sup> In some lamps the channel was left undecorated. The shape of the base follows the outline of the lamp.

One of the lamps is unusual in both ware and decoration, though in all other details it does not differ from the others. The lamp is made from yellowish-light brown clay, and its entire surface is covered with hexagons. The channel is decorated with a branch design. The junction of the upper and lower halves of the lamp is covered with a layer of clay that, through carelessness, also covers part of the decoration of the rim.

Lamps of this type were discovered in catacombs at Beth She'arim and were divided by Avigad into three subtypes.<sup>165</sup> The Bet Shean lamps parallel subtype b. Some of the lamps carry an identical decoration or similar designs in different variations; it is possible that both the lamps from Bet Shean and those from Beth She'arim were made in one workshop or in identical molds in different workshops. These lamps were dated by Avigad to the end of the sixth to the beginning of the seventh century C.E. This type parallels type 59 of Elgavish, dated by him, on the basis of the hoard from catacomb 24 at Bet She'arim, to the second half of the sixth century C.E.<sup>166</sup>

A number of lamps of this type were discovered at Pella.<sup>167</sup> The earliest lamp was found in tomb 7, which was in use, in Smith's opinion, in the period between 521/2 and the end of the seventh century C.E.; the lamp belongs to this time period. The latest lamp was dated to the second quarter of the eighth century C.E. Lamps of this type were also discovered at Gadara, where they were described by Nielsen as Islamic type<sup>168</sup> and dated by da Costa to the early seventh to the late eighth century C.E.<sup>169</sup>

Two of the complete lamps discovered at Bet Shean were found in shops in the destruction level resulting from the earthquake of 749 C.E. These shops were not reconstructed. One lamp was discovered in "the shop of the hoard" (Loc. 54158), in which silver and gold coins were also found. The oldest gold coin helped determine the exact year of the earthquake.<sup>170</sup> The lamps were discovered in the occupation level of the shops, indicating they were in use at the time of the destruction in 749 C.E. Two other lamps were discovered in a room built near the Roman basilica (Loc. 64023). In the Umayyad period a kiln, in which some of the period's pottery at Bet Shean was made, was constructed in the room. Fifty type 2 lamps, but not a single mold, were discovered in the Umayyad kilns near the Roman theater.<sup>171</sup> On the basis of the finds from Bet Shean, this lamp type should apparently be dated to the Umayyad period; it remained

<sup>164</sup>On the fish decoration on clay lamps, see Sussman, "Figures," 81, and M. Schloessinger-Schaar, "Five Lamps with Fish Reliefs from Israel and Other Mediterranean Countries," *IEJ* 1 (1950), 84–94.

<sup>165</sup>Avigad, *Beth She'arim*, III, 190–92, with extensive discussion of this type.

<sup>166</sup>Elgavish, "Art," I, 216. Twenty lamps of this type were discovered in the hoard from catacomb 24; *ibid.*, I, 56–58.

<sup>167</sup>Smith, *Pella*, I, 239, pl. 30:1315; *ibid.*, 219 f, pl. 67:190; Smith and Day, *Pella*, II, 117, pl. 65:15; McNicoll et al., *Pella*, I, 130, pl. 140:10.

<sup>168</sup>Nielsen et al., *Gadara*, III, 170, pl. 36:345, 347.

<sup>169</sup>Da Costa, "Umm Qeis," 335, fig. 8:8.

<sup>170</sup>Tsafrir and Foerster, "Earthquake" (as above, note 4).

<sup>171</sup>On these kilns, see Mazor, "Bet Shean—1988," 29 f. The only mold found in the kilns is one for preparing lamps with a conical handle (see below, type 3). My thanks to Mark Bloka who informed me of this.

in use until the end of this period, 749 C.E. The absence of these lamps from the Abbasid stratum at Pella, in contrast to the appearance of lamps of types 1 and 3, indicates that type 2 did not continue to exist beyond the Umayyad period.

*Type 3 (Figs. 43–47).* Lamps of this type are the most widespread at Bet Shean in the Umayyad period. Together with type 2 lamps, they were the lamps used at Bet Shean during this period, as opposed to type 1 lamps, which should be considered a chance find not representative of the site. Unlike the previous type, this type is widespread throughout Palestine. The lamps are made from several types of clay: yellowish, light to dark brown, and dark gray. A few isolated lamps were slipped with reddish-brown slip. The lamps are pear-shaped. The filling hole is surrounded by a ridge that extends to the wick hole, creating a channel. Adjacent to the ridge at the back of the lamp is a conical handle. The lamps average 10–11 cm in length and 3–4 cm in height (Fig. 43). The decorations are simple, composed in large part of geometric patterns, including concentric half-circles with the outer ones occasionally intertwined, wheels, small concentric circles, crescents, triangles decorated with a ladder design, or two rows of triangles along the rim. One lamp is decorated with arabesques. A few lamps were decorated with a stylized branch, in most cases enclosed in a frame narrowed at both ends. Another decoration, also well known from other sites, involves partitioning the rim into two by a ridge: below the ridge are equidistant lines; above it, around the filling hole, are small dots.

Of the lamps discovered at Bet Shean—eleven complete lamps and 108 fragments of different sizes—a few stand out in their shape and ornamentation. The largest lamp found at Bet Shean, of which only half was preserved, was especially magnificent. The lamp is made from orange-brown clay and is red-slipped. The wick hole is very large and very sooty, indicating the extensive use made of this lamp. Remnants of burnt matter are visible on the wick hole. The lamp is decorated with intermittent triangles, with two volutes at the apex, and with half-circles. Both the triangles and half-circles are decorated with a ladder design. The filling hole is surrounded by a ridge that forms a broad and deep channel. Around the filling hole there is also a deep depression. The lamp has a very beautiful ring base decorated with an eight-spoked wheel within and with different geometric patterns around the base.

Another lamp is unusual in its square filling hole (Fig. 44). At Bet Shean a complete lamp and a fragment were discovered, apparently made in the same mold. No parallel was found for this lamp at other sites, and the fact that it was uncommon even at Bet Shean indicates its uniqueness.

Yet another lamp is unusual in its elongated shape, uncharacteristic of Bet Shean lamps, and in its crude and careless workmanship. The lamp is handmade from yellowish clay. The rim is decorated with a ladder design bordered on one side by a slightly raised ridge. This decoration continues around the lamp with the conical handle found midway between the filling hole and the ridge. The area between the filling hole and the wick hole is decorated with ridges. The wick hole is relatively large, almost the size of the filling hole. It bears no traces of soot, indicating that this lamp was not used. The lamp has a small, very carelessly made ring base. In addition to this almost complete lamp, missing a small part of its rim, two fragments were discovered. The

elongated shape of the lamp is more characteristic of Syrian lamps than of lamps from Palestine.<sup>172</sup>

On all the lamps the channel along the nozzle is decorated with lengthwise parallel lines, with a ladder design, or with undefined geometric patterns.

On three lamps the channel carried a one-word Kufic inscription. On one example the word "Allah" was written twice: in the channel it was written in mirror writing, whereas on the nozzle near the channel it was written in the regular way (Fig. 45). On the lamp with the square filling hole, the word "bi'llah" ("in God") appears in mirror writing, and on the third lamp the word "Allah" appears in the regular way (Fig. 43). During the last season, 1997, another twelve inscribed lamps were found, most of them complete.<sup>172a</sup>

Lamps with inscriptions are very rare in excavations in Palestine. Thus far, a lamp from Capernaum with the inscription "luck and happiness to the owner" has been published,<sup>173</sup> as well as a lamp from Beth She'arim in whose channel the word "Allah" appears.<sup>174</sup> Inscribed lamps were published by Clermont-Ganneau,<sup>175</sup> Day,<sup>176</sup> and Bagatti.<sup>177</sup> There are also several such lamps in private collections, including that published by Kennedy<sup>178</sup> and the Schloessinger collection.<sup>179</sup> Yet another example is in the Benaki Museum in Athens.<sup>180</sup> One inscribed lamp was found at Pella;<sup>181</sup> a single word on its channel was read by A. G. Walmsley as "bism" ("in the name of"). Two lamps from Jordan have been published without any indication of their origin. One of them is similar in ornamentation to the Bet Shean lamp (Fig. 43) and in its channel carries the word "Bismi" ("in the name of").<sup>182</sup> The inscriptions contain the words "Allah" or "bi'llah," a blessing for the buyer, or the name of the potter.

Another type of inscription appearing on these lamps is Christian and written in Greek, continuing the tradition of inscriptions on Byzantine candlestick lamps. These lamps were not discovered in excavations in Palestine but were published in private collections such as that published by Kennedy,<sup>183</sup> a group of lamps published by

<sup>172</sup> Israeli and Avida, *Warschaw*, 170 f. The Bet Shean, lamp is particularly close to no. 484. See also Modrzeska-Marciniak, "Anab Safina," 144–46, type v. Two types are included in this type: one parallels type 1 of the Byzantine-Umayyad period at Bet Shean, and the second is elongated. The square filling hole in the previous lamp may also be the result of the influence of the Syrian lamp. See below, imported lamps, Byzantine-period type 1.

<sup>172a</sup> For the fifteen inscribed lamps from the Umayyad period and the seventeen inscribed lamps from the Abbasid-Fatimid period, see S. Hadad and E. Khamis, "Inscribed Pottery Lamps from the Early Islamic Period at Bet Shean, Israel," *IEJ* (forthcoming).

<sup>173</sup> Bagatti, "Cafarnaō," 267–69, fig. 3:4, fig. 4:1.

<sup>174</sup> Avigad, *Beth She'arim*, III, 193, no. 53.

<sup>175</sup> Ch. Clermont-Ganneau, "Nouveau lychnarion à inscription coufique," *Recueil d'archéologie orientale* 3 (1900), 283–85, pl. VII:B, C.

<sup>176</sup> Day, "Islamic," 66, 69, pl. ix:2, pl. x:1.

<sup>177</sup> B. Bagatti, *I monumenti di Emmaus el-Qubeibeh e dei dintorni* (Jerusalem, 1947), 141, fig. 87.

<sup>178</sup> Kennedy, "Development," 89 f, type 23, group A, no. 764.

<sup>179</sup> Rosenthal and Sivan, *Schloessinger*, 133, nos. 542–44.

<sup>180</sup> H. Philon, *Benaki Museum, Early Islamic Ceramics* (London, 1980), 26, fig. 50. This lamp is identical to a lamp found in Bet Shean in the 1991/92 season. The lamp is described with a two-line inscription: "In the name of Allah/Blessing from Allah."

<sup>181</sup> Walmsley et al., "Pella, 1989–1990," 228, type 3, no. 3. This word should be read as "Allah."

<sup>182</sup> Amr, "Inscribed Pottery Lamps," 165–68, figs. 9, 10. This word should be read as "Allah."

<sup>183</sup> Kennedy, "Development," 110, no. 761.

Bagatti,<sup>184</sup> and the Warschaw collection.<sup>185</sup> In her article on early Islamic and Christian lamps, Day also published one such lamp.<sup>186</sup>

A rare lamp on whose base appears the Syrian word *شمعة* (Shammua') below a cross was published by J. Naveh.<sup>187</sup>

Several types of bases are characteristic of these lamps: ring base (the most common), rhombus base, triangular base, elongated rounded base, and a base following the outline of the lamp. Most of the bases are decorated, occasionally with an especially splendid and impressive decoration, but usually with ridges and dots or a six- to eight-spoked wheel in a ring base.<sup>188</sup> A mold used in the preparation of a base decorated with an eight-spoked wheel was discovered at Bet Shean (Fig. 46) together with the Jerash lamp mold (Loc. 565).

Another type of lamp, often confused with the type under discussion, is similar to type 3 in its elongated pear shape but differs in a few characteristics: it has a high "tongue" handle and more complex ornamentation including vegetal designs, animal decoration, and decorative patterns that "imitate" mosaics, alongside simple geometric patterns (Fig. 47). Several lamps were even glazed. The base, whose shape follows the outline of the lamp, is most often undecorated. There is a strong connection between the kind of handle and the kind of base: lamps with a conical handle generally have a decorated base, whereas lamps with a "tongue" handle almost always have an undecorated base.<sup>189</sup> A clear distinction has not always been made between the two types. Sometimes they are treated as contemporaneous: at Caesarea both types were dated to the Umayyad period.<sup>190</sup> At Geva they were dated to the early Islamic period.<sup>191</sup> At Antioch they are included in type 56 and dated to the sixth century C.E.,<sup>192</sup> but they continue in use later.

<sup>184</sup> B. Bagatti, "Lucerne fittili di Palestina dei secoli VII–VIII," *RACr* 40 (1964), 256–58, fig. 1:15–17. Bagatti noted that the lamps originated in Hebron, but this is apparently incorrect. Also the rest of the lamps in this figure with the elongated shape and the crosses in the channels originate in Syria. See below, note 224.

<sup>185</sup> Israeli and Avida, *Warschaw*, 170 f, nos. 479–86. See also S. Loffreda, "Le lucerne bizantine palestinesi espressione popolare della fede cristiana," *La Terra Santa* 66 (1990), 116–22, fig. 9. Loffreda defines this as a Byzantine lamp.

<sup>186</sup> Day, "Islamic," 66, pl. IX:1.

<sup>187</sup> Naveh, "Lamp," 39 f, no. 8.

<sup>188</sup> The base decoration of an eight-spoked wheel is very widespread in Syria; see Israeli and Avida, *Warschaw*, 174 f, nos. 491, 492, 495.

<sup>189</sup> Day ("Islamic," 66) has previously dealt with the connection between the handle and the base. This connection is also proven by the Bet Shean assemblage: most of the Umayyad lamp bases are decorated, as they are in the Schloessinger collection; cf. Rosenthal and Sivan, *Schloessinger*, 131–33, nos. 533–45. The bases of Abbasid lamps with the "tongue" handle, on the other hand, are almost never decorated. At Bet Shean, of all the lamps of this type, only two are decorated. A similar phenomenon can be observed on the lamps in the Schloessinger collection: of the seventeen lamps published, only three are decorated; see Rosenthal and Sivan, *Schloessinger*, 133–36, nos. 546–62.

<sup>190</sup> N. Brosh, "Pottery of the 8th–13th Centuries (Strata 1–3)," in *Excavations at Caesarea Martima, 1975, 1976, 1979: Final Report, Qedem* 21, ed. L. I. Levine and E. Netzer (Jerusalem, 1986), 71.

<sup>191</sup> V. Sussman, "Geva (Abu-Shusha) Lamps," in *Geva Archaeological Discoveries at Tell Abu-Shusha, Mishmar Ha-'Emeq*, ed. B. Mazar (Jerusalem, 1988; in Hebrew), 103.

<sup>192</sup> F. O. Waagé, "Lamps," in *Antioch on-the-Orontes*, III, ed. R. Stillwell (Princeton, 1941), 67 f. At Hama the lamps with the conical handle were dated from the mid-6th to the second quarter of the 7th century C.E. The lamps with the "tongue" handle were dated to the 7th century C.E. See A. Papanicolaou Christensen, R.

H. Philon dated them to the eighth to eleventh century C.E.<sup>193</sup> These two types of lamps have also been treated as different variants of one type.<sup>194</sup>

F. Day, in her article on early Islamic and Christian lamps, was the first to discuss these lamps and made the first attempt to date them on typological and stylistic grounds.<sup>195</sup> Three lamp types were considered: lamps with a conical handle (our type 3), lamps with a “tongue” handle, and Jerash lamps (type 1). The lamps with a conical handle were dated to the Umayyad period, with a variant continuing into the Abbasid period.<sup>196</sup> Lamps with a “tongue” handle also appear in the Umayyad period and continue into the Abbasid period.<sup>197</sup>

At Khirbet el Mefjer, Baramki divided the lamps into four groups. The first two groups parallel our type 3. According to Baramki, these lamps were found “in the rooms undisturbed since the earthquake” of 749 C.E. The other two groups, both lamps with a “tongue” handle, belong to the periods following the earthquake.<sup>198</sup> The pottery from Khirbet el Mefjer has recently been discussed by D. Whitcomb. His analysis determines that the earthquake of 749 C.E. “did not result in a major interruption in the occupation of the site.” The pottery found with the lamps with a conical handle was dated by him to periods 1 and 2 (late 8th–early 9th century C.E.), and therefore the lamps should also be dated to this period.<sup>199</sup>

Lamps of this type were found in Jericho in a building dated by E. Sellin and C. Watzinger to the fourth to fifth century C.E.,<sup>200</sup> but which according to Barag should be dated to the Umayyad period.<sup>201</sup> This building was destroyed in the earthquake of 749 C.E.; therefore, the latest lamps belong to the end of the Umayyad period. At Beth She’arim the lamps with a conical handle were dated by Avigad to the Umayyad period (7th–8th century C.E.), and the lamps with a “tongue” handle were dated to the Umayyad and Abbasid periods (8th–9th century C.E.).<sup>202</sup> Lamps from Jerusalem were dated by Magness to the seventh to the early eighth century C.E.<sup>203</sup>

No lamps with a conical handle were discovered at Amman or Jerash, but they were

---

Thomsen, and G. Ploug, *The Graeco-Roman Objects of Clay, the Coins and the Necropolis [Hama: Fouilles et Recherches, 1931–1938, III.3]* (Copenhagen, 1986), 36, fig. 13:a, b, f–h; fig. 16:h–j; fig. 17:e–i.

<sup>193</sup> Philon, *Benaki*, 7 f.

<sup>194</sup> Rosenthal and Sivan, *Schloessinger*, 129–31.

<sup>195</sup> Day, “Islamic.”

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., 66–71.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid., 71–74.

<sup>198</sup> D. C. Baramki, “The Pottery from Khirbet el Mefjer,” *QDAP* 10 (1944), 73 f.

<sup>199</sup> D. Whitcomb, “Khirbet al-Mafjar Reconsidered: The Ceramic Evidence,” *BASOR* 271 (1988), 51–67. In his article, Whitcomb deals only with pottery and not with lamps. Dating the vessels to periods 1 and 2 is accepted today and has been strengthened by the recent excavations at Pella. On the other hand, Baramki’s correct typological division stands, and the dates he assigned to the lamps on the basis of his understanding of the stratigraphy of the site fit in with the finds from Bet Shean. Whitcomb’s analysis shows that the lamps with a conical handle and the pottery found with them are from the end of the Umayyad period and the beginning of the Abbasid period; there was no interruption in the settlement of the site between these two periods.

<sup>200</sup> E. Sellin and C. Watzinger, *Jericho, die Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen* (Leipzig, 1913), 164, nos. 1, 2.

<sup>201</sup> Barag, “Glass,” 51 f.

<sup>202</sup> Avigad, *Beth She’arim*, III, 193 f, pl. LXXI:47–52.

<sup>203</sup> Magness, *Jerusalem*, 255–58, form 4—variants B–C.

found at Pella, in the Abbasid town center, and were dated to the second half of the eighth to the beginning of the ninth century C.E.<sup>204</sup> Lamps with “tongue” handles were discovered at Jerash and dated to the Abbasid period;<sup>205</sup> at Pella they were dated to the ninth to tenth century C.E.<sup>206</sup> Type 3 lamps were also found on Mount Nebo.<sup>207</sup>

Type 3 parallels type A at Fustat.<sup>208</sup> W. B. Kubiak distinguishes two variants: lamps with a conical handle and lamps with a “tongue” handle. These two variants were in use, in his opinion, in the ninth to tenth century C.E. Several lamps with a “tongue” handle were discovered in contexts dated to the second half of the eleventh century C.E.

Type 3 was the only lamp type discovered in the Umayyad Palace at Ussais in Syria, dated to the end of the seventh to the early eighth century C.E.<sup>209</sup> At Buṣra in the Ḥauran, these lamps were dated to the late second half of the eighth and the beginning of the ninth century C.E.<sup>210</sup> Type 3 parallels type V at Anab Safina in Syria.<sup>211</sup> According to I. Modrzeska-Marciniak, it appears beginning from the fourth century C.E. and continues with several changes until the end of the eighth century C.E. Only one lamp fragment of this type was discovered at Tel ‘Arqa in northern Lebanon.<sup>212</sup> It was described as a transitional type between the Byzantine lamps of the sixth century C.E. and the early Islamic types.

No determination can be made, on the basis of the Bet Shean excavations, as to when in the Umayyad period these lamps began to appear. The date at which usage of these lamps was discontinued can, however, be determined from the archaeological evidence. Several lamps were discovered in the shops destroyed in 749 C.E. and not reconstructed. One was discovered in a shop (Loc. 706) where a bronze lamp was also found. Some of the lamps were discovered in the residential quarter built on the ruins from the earthquake of 749 C.E. In other areas these lamps were also discovered in Umayyad or Umayyad-Abbasid contexts. In these shops not a single lamp with a “tongue” handle was found, indicating that such lamps were not in use before 749 C.E., that is, they appear only beginning with the Abbasid period. In summary, the lamps with a conical handle are from the Umayyad period and continue to the beginning of the Abbasid period (as is demonstrated from the finds at Pella, Buṣra in the Ḥauran, and Bet Shean), when they are replaced by lamps with a “tongue” handle.

## II. IMPORTED CLAY LAMPS

Five fragments of clay lamps of four different types are presented below. The lamps originated in Greece, Egypt(?), North Africa, and Syria. The small number of imported

<sup>204</sup> Walmsley et al., “Pella, 1989–1990,” 227–31, types 2–4. The absence of these lamps from Umayyad contexts and their appearance only in Abbasid contexts are very surprising.

<sup>205</sup> Lamps with the “tongue” handle are included in group VI (fig. 1:11). This lamp is defined by Scholl (“Chronology,” 165) as “typically Abbassid” (sic).

<sup>206</sup> Walmsley et al., “Pella, 1989–1990,” 230 f, type 5.

<sup>207</sup> A. Saller, *The Memorial of Moses on Mt. Nebo, Parts I–II* (Jerusalem, 1941), 322–24; B. Bagatti, “Nuova ceramica del Monte Nebo,” *Lib. ann.* 35 (1985), 249–78. Mount Nebo is a pilgrimage site and therefore should not be treated as a regular site.

<sup>208</sup> W. B. Kubiak, “Medieval Ceramic Oil Lamps from Fustat,” *Ars Orientalis* 8 (1970), 3–6.

<sup>209</sup> K. Brisch, “Das omayyadische Schloss in Ussais (II),” *MDAI* 20 (1965), 166–70.

<sup>210</sup> Berthier, “Buṣrā,” 11 f, pl. 1. Lamps identical to the lamp in fig. 1 were found in Bet Shean in the 1993/94 season.

<sup>211</sup> Modrzeska-Marciniak, “Anab Safina,” 142–44.

<sup>212</sup> J. P. Thalmann, “Tell ‘Arqa (Liban Nord), Campagnes I–III (1972–1974),” *Syria* 55 (1978), 47, fig. 12.

lamps compared with local lamps suggests that, rather than representing evidence of a systematic and organized import trade, the presence of these lamps at Bet Shean is completely fortuitous.

#### *Late Roman Period*

*Type 1* (Fig. 48). A single lamp handle was discovered of this type. This is a high, solid handle decorated with two lengthwise incisions. The lamp is made from red-brown clay and is red-slipped (Fig. 48). Type 1 parallels type XXVIII of O. Broneer, which he dated from the mid-third to the beginning of the fifth century C.E.<sup>213</sup> Lamps of this type were discovered in the Athenian Agora and described by J. Perlzweig as "Attic lamps from the 3rd–4th centuries C.E."<sup>214</sup> A lamp handle identical to the Bet Shean example was discovered at Jalame and dated to the fourth century C.E.<sup>215</sup>

The Bet Shean fragment was discovered in an Abbasid drainage channel near the nymphaeum (Loc. 74575). The lamp cannot be dated on the basis of the Bet Shean excavations; a fourth-century C.E. date—and perhaps only the second half of that century—is also acceptable here.

*Type 2* (Fig. 49). Only one lamp fragment of this type was discovered at Bet Shean. The lamp is made from light brown clay shading to gray and has many grits. This mold-made lamp has a high handmade loop handle. A small part of the discus with two filling holes survived. No ornamentation is visible on this part of the discus, and there is no way of knowing if in fact it was decorated. The rim of the lamp is decorated with incised lines, and the base is a carelessly made ring base (Fig. 49).

This type generally parallels type D 1.3 at Karanis, dated to the fourth century C.E. and possibly continuing into the fifth century C.E.<sup>216</sup>

The fragment from Bet Shean was found in a section in one of the shops northwest of Palladius Street (Loc. 75075) in association with late Roman and Byzantine pottery. On the basis of the finds from Bet Shean and Karanis, this lamp can be dated to the fourth to fifth century C.E.

*Type 3* (Fig. 50). Two fragments of this type, which is considered one of the North African lamps,<sup>217</sup> were discovered at Bet Shean. The lamps are made from red clay. About half of the upper part of the first lamp survived; the rim is ornamented with a ladder design. A small part of the discus, with a small filling hole and part of a decoration in

<sup>213</sup>O. Broneer, *Corinth, IV.2: Terracotta Lamps* (Cambridge, Mass., 1930), 102–14.

<sup>214</sup>J. Perlzweig, *The Athenian Agora, VII: Lamps of the Roman Period, First to Seventh Century after Christ* (Princeton, 1961), 17–64. The Bet Shean lamp is particularly close to the lamp in pl. 25:1303. This lamp is dated by Perlzweig to the second half of the 4th century C.E.

<sup>215</sup>Manzoni MacDonnell, "Terracotta," 119 f, 131, 133, pl. 6–3:79. According to Manzoni, this lamp may be a Greek import.

<sup>216</sup>L. A. Shier, *Terracotta Lamps from Karanis, Egypt* (Ann Arbor, 1978), 45–47, pl. 7:422. Although the Bet Shean lamp differs from Karanis lamps in several characteristics, it resembles them in that it is a mold-made discus lamp to which a handmade loop handle was affixed. The lamps from Karanis are also made carelessly.

<sup>217</sup>For an extensive discussion of this type and its characteristics, see Bailey, *Catalogue*, 181–85; J. W. Hayes, *Late Roman Pottery* (London, 1972), 310–15; A. Ennabli, *Lampes chrétiennes de Tunisie* (Paris, 1976).

high relief adjacent to it, was preserved.<sup>218</sup> The solid handle is vertical and has a groove down its center (Fig. 50). The second fragment is a base decorated with grooves forming a design beneath the handle. The North African lamps were divided by J. W. Hayes into two types. The Bet Shean specimens belong to type 1, dated by Hayes to the fourth to the beginning of the fifth century C.E.<sup>219</sup>

The more complete of the two lamps was discovered in Locus 614 near the eastern entrance to the amphitheater. Local clay lamps of late-Roman-period types 7–9 and Byzantine-period types 1 and 2 were also discovered. Neither this lamp nor the fragment of the second lamp was discovered in clear stratigraphy allowing for dating. Hayes' dating is also acceptable here.

#### *Byzantine Period*

*Type 1* (Fig. 51). One type 1 handle was discovered at Bet Shean; this type parallels type 21 of J. J. Dobbins.<sup>220</sup> These lamps are characterized by an elongated body and a high, broad handle. The lamps have a clear channel along the nozzle, and the discus is surrounded by a pronounced ridge. The filling hole is large. In a few of the lamps the handles are in human shape.<sup>221</sup> The fragment from Bet Shean is made from yellowish clay with traces of brown slip. The trapezoid-shaped handle is decorated with a design of superimposed half-circles and a ladder motif. The edges of the handle are straight (Fig. 51).

These lamps originated in Syria, where they were found at Antioch, Dibsi Faraj, Misis, and Hama. According to Dobbins, they were produced at Antioch.<sup>222</sup> Lamps of this type from private collections have also been published, including the collection published by Kennedy,<sup>223</sup> the group of lamps published by Bagatti,<sup>224</sup> the Schloessinger collection,<sup>225</sup>

<sup>218</sup>This may be part of the legs of an animal, like lamp no. 280 in the Schloessinger collection; see Rosenthal and Sivan, *Schloessinger*, 68.

<sup>219</sup>Hayes, *Pottery*, 311 f.

<sup>220</sup>J. J. Dobbins, "Terracotta Lamps of the Roman Province of Syria" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1977), 127–32.

<sup>221</sup>Israeli and Avida, *Warschaw*, nos. 470, 474, 475; Rosenthal and Sivan, *Schloessinger*, no. 501.

<sup>222</sup>Dobbins, "Syria," 129; Papanicolaou Christensen, Thomsen, and Ploug, *Hama*, III, 36, fig. 15:L-T; 111–13, figs. 38, 39. The lamps are dated by them to the 5th–6th century C.E. Dobbins ("Syria," p. 131 and n. 36) notes that lamps such as these were also found in Palestine and that there may have been several Syro-Palestinian production centers. He relies on Bagatti's work. See below, note 224.

<sup>223</sup>Kennedy, "Development," 87, type xx. The origin of the lamps, when known, is Aleppo and Suba in Syria.

<sup>224</sup>Bagatti, "Lucerne," 262–64, group 2. Bagatti notes that the lamps in his work originate from the region of Hebron, but the three types appearing in this article are apparently Syrian and not local at all. The round lamp type (fig. 2:6–13, fig. 3:7–11) was not discovered at any site in Palestine and is known only from private collections. It has been found, however, in Syria. For a discussion of this type, see Israeli and Avida, *Warschaw*, 172 f; Rosenthal and Sivan, *Schloessinger*, 141 f; Bailey, *Catalogue*, 290 f, nos. Q2349–3353. It is of note that in the collection published by Kennedy ("Development," 94, 113, pl. xxx:818) there is one round lamp originating in Bet Shean.

The lamps with the conical handle (fig. 1; fig. 2:1, 2), bearing Christian inscriptions and crosses, also originate in Syria. As far as is known, no lamp of this type has been discovered in excavations in Palestine. For a discussion of these lamps, see Israeli and Avida, *Warschaw*, 170 f, 174 f. See also the discussion of local clay lamps, Umayyad-period type 3.

All the lamps are dated by Bagatti to the 7th–8th century C.E. These lamps were probably bought in the area from a local resident, but were certainly not found in an excavation there.

<sup>225</sup>Rosenthal and Sivan, *Schloessinger*, 121, nos. 501–4.

and the Warschaw collection.<sup>226</sup> There are several such lamps in the British Museum.<sup>227</sup>

The fragment from Bet Shean was discovered in a water channel near the amphitheater (Loc. 291) in association with pottery, mostly Byzantine with some Roman and early Islamic. These lamps cannot be dated on the basis of the finds from Bet Shean. The opinion of Dobbins, who dates these lamps, on the basis of the Antioch and Dibsi Faraj excavations, to the sixth to seventh century C.E., is acceptable here.<sup>228</sup>

### III. BRONZE LAMPS

Three bronze lamps were discovered in recent excavations at Bet Shean in addition to those previously found.<sup>229</sup>

#### *Late Roman Period*

*Type 1* (Fig. 52). This lamp is characterized by a very large filling hole surrounded by a pronounced ridge;<sup>230</sup> around the ridge is a circle of incised lines. On both sides of the filling hole are three protruding lines, an imitation of the “double-axe” design that also appears on clay lamps from the second to third century C.E. The nozzle is small and rounded. The handle was not preserved, and the base is a low disc base (Fig. 52).

No parallel for this lamp has been found at other sites in Palestine. The absence of parallels from abroad can be explained by the local character of this type.

The lamp from Bet Shean, discovered near the basilica in a surface stratum (Loc. 571), cannot be dated on the basis of the context in which it was found. Any conclusions must rely on two characteristics: (a) a “double-axe” design imitation and (b) a large filling hole. On the basis of these characteristics, it is proposed to date this lamp to the third to the beginning of the fourth century C.E.

#### *Byzantine Period*

*Type 1* (Fig. 53). This lamp can be defined as a Jewish or Samaritan oil lamp. It has a high handle decorated with a *shofar*, *lulav*, and *etrog*. A seven-branched menorah, which should appear between the *shofar* and *lulav*, is missing (Fig. 53).<sup>231</sup> These motifs of the menorah and its accompanying symbols are characteristic of Jewish and Samaritan art in synagogues from the late Roman and Byzantine periods. Behind the high handle is a loop handle used for holding the lamp. The nozzle is elongated and decorated with vertical lines. The wick hole has a broad rim, whereas the filling hole is small and surrounded by a slightly sunken discus. A lid intended to cover the filling hole was not preserved. The rim is undecorated. The lamp has a ring base in whose center is a square

<sup>226</sup> Israeli and Avida, *Warschaw*, 167, nos. 470–78. The Bet Shean lamp is closer to nos. 471, 476, 478.

<sup>227</sup> Bailey, *Catalogue*, 289, no. Q2344.

<sup>228</sup> Dobbins, “Syria,” 131 f.

<sup>229</sup> A few lamps were published by N. Zori, “Bronze Utensils from Byzantine Beth She’ān,” *Qadmoniot* 3 (1970), 67–68 (in Hebrew), but most are unpublished. A bronze lamp on a lampstand and a bronze lamp lid were published by Fitzgerald (*Excavations*, pl. 37:9, pl. 38:1). In addition to these three lamps, a lid and lampstand unrelated to the lamps were discovered in the present excavations.

<sup>230</sup> A large filling hole is characteristic of lamps referred to as “Karm al-Sheikh lamps” (late Roman lamps, type 6). This type is dated at Bet Shean to the first half of the 4th century C.E.

<sup>231</sup> The menorah may have been removed intentionally after this lamp changed owners. A nine-branched menorah that served as a lamp handle was published by Zori (“Bronze,” 67).

hole so it could be placed on a lampstand. An identical lamp is found in the Schloessinger collection and dated by Rosenthal and Sivan to the fourth to sixth century C.E.<sup>232</sup>

The lamp from Bet Shean was discovered in a shop (Loc. 706) destroyed in the earthquake of 749 C.E. and not reconstructed.<sup>233</sup> Finding this lamp in the shop indicates that it was in use at the time of the destruction and certainly also for many years before it. The hole in the base of the lamp indicates that the lamp dates no earlier than the fifth century C.E., and its shape no later than the sixth century.<sup>234</sup>

*Type 2 (Fig. 54).* This lamp is characterized by an elongated body. The high handle, decorated symmetrically with tendrils and two birds, only one of which was preserved, is quite prominent. The central ornamentation that should be in the center of the handle did not survive. The nozzle is elongated. The wick hole is small and surrounded by a broad rim. An addition of a rectangular monogrammed piece of bronze is visible on the underside of the wick hole. The filling hole is small, and a lid intended to cover it was not preserved. The lamp is undecorated except for two ellipses incised on either side of the handle. The lamp has a high ring base and in its center a square hole intended for placing the lamp on a lampstand (Fig. 54).

A lamp with a similar handle, but with two nozzles, is found in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection. In the center of this handle is a cross, which may have also decorated the handle from Bet Shean. This lamp was dated by M. C. Ross to the sixth century C.E.<sup>235</sup> There is another lamp more like the Bet Shean example in the British Museum. Its handle is also decorated with a cross.<sup>236</sup> It is possible that the cross that decorated the Bet Shean lamp was intentionally removed by its non-Christian residents.

The lamp from Bet Shean was discovered near the Roman temple in the destruction level of the earthquake of 749 C.E. (Loc. 75005). Its finding in this level indicates that the lamp, which should be dated to the sixth century C.E., was in use at the time of the destruction.

#### CONCLUSION

Thirty-four types of clay and bronze lamps are presented in this study. This lamp assemblage is important in determining the dating of the Umayyad period lamps, especially the lamps with the conical handle (type 3), which had been generally dated, together with the lamps with the "tongue" handle, to the early Islamic period. The assemblage is also important in its wide variety of lamp types, some of which were discovered for the first time in excavations in Palestine, whereas until now they had been known only from private collections. Even if the finds are minimal, the fact that they were discovered in an archaeological context is important. Some of the types have been discovered only at Bet Shean, with no parallels at other sites in Palestine or neighboring lands.

<sup>232</sup> Rosenthal and Sivan, *Schloessinger*, 160, no. 662.

<sup>233</sup> On the date of the earthquake, see Tsafrir and Foerster, "Earthquake."

<sup>234</sup> Thanks to Dan Barag, who assisted in dating this lamp.

<sup>235</sup> M. C. Ross, *Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Mediaeval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*, I (Washington, D.C., 1962), 36 f, pl. xxviii:38. This lamp originated in Egypt.

<sup>236</sup> A *Guide to the Early Christian and Byzantine Antiquities* (London, 1921), fig. 9. The lamp is defined as Byzantine, but neither a more exact date nor the origin of the lamp is indicated.

Notwithstanding the appearance of local lamps in eastern Transjordan, Lebanon, and Syria, and of nonlocal lamps at Bet Shean, and in spite of Bet Shean's being one of the cities of the Decapolis, from the point of view of material culture—at least with regard to lamps—Bet Shean exists as a regional model for the area of the Jordan Valley and adjacent Samaria. Lamps originating from these regions in both the late Roman and Byzantine periods are the most common at Bet Shean as far as quantity is concerned. Moreover, the nature of the Bet Shean lamps is different from that of lamps from Galilee or Phoenicia, which are geographically nearer to Bet Shean than the cities of the Decapolis across the Jordan River.

In the Umayyad period, a local lamp (type 3) was well known and widespread at Bet Shean and throughout Palestine, but otherwise known only in Pella and only in the early Abbasid period. This find stands opposed to the rest of the pottery from Bet Shean during this period, which in the Umayyad period is identical to that at Pella, Jerash, and Amman.<sup>237</sup> To summarize, a sufficiently defined geographical division is revealed where lamps are concerned. Despite the small distances in question and the existence of established trade and commercial routes, it is still difficult to speak about the wide distribution of or the import/export trade in lamps.

Hebrew University of Jerusalem

<sup>237</sup> Fitzgerald, *Excavations*, pls. xxx–xxxv; Smith, *Pella*, I, 229–36; Zayadine, *Jerash*, I, 118, 333–36, 411–37; and Harding, “Citadel,” figs. 2–4, pls. III, IV. The finds from the present excavations at Bet Shean, which have not yet been published, considerably strengthen these connections.

## CATALOGUE

*Note:*

A, B, C = Areas in and around the amphitheater  
 G = The Umayyad shopping street

E = The nymphaeum, basilica, and the temple  
 L. = locus

Catalogue numbers correspond to figure numbers.

1. E L.884, 10982/1  
 Length, 9.1 cm; height, 2.7 cm  
 Round lamp; pale yellow (2.5Y 7/4)\* clay, red (10R 5/8) slip; on rim, lines; discus base.
2. E L.74024, 740526  
 Length, 9.5 cm; height, 2.7 cm  
 Round lamp with vertical handle; reddish-yellow (7.5YR 7/6) clay, traces of light red (7.5R 6/6) slip; on rim, stamped flowers; ring base.
3. B L.615, 6416  
 Length, 9 cm; height, 2.5 cm  
 Round lamp with vertical handle; light red (10R 6/8) clay, gray (7.5R 5/0) core; on rim, a string of raised dots; ring base.
4. E L.74046, 740746/1  
 Round lamp; very pale brown (10YR 8/3) clay; on rim, a string of pellets.
5. E L.75107, 751468  
 Height, 3.1 cm  
 Ovoid lamp; pink (7.5YR 8/4) clay; on rim, stamped circles; ring base.
6. E L.619, 6640  
 Length, 7.7 cm; height, 2.6 cm  
 Round lamp; pinkish-white (7.5YR 8/2) clay, traces of red (10R 5/8) slip; on rim, closed triangles; ring base.
7. B L.614, 6783  
 Length, 8 cm; height, 2.2 cm  
 Ovoid lamp; reddish yellow (5YR 7/6) clay, red (2.5YR 4/6) slip; on rim, a herringbone pattern.
8. E L.620, 8635  
 Length, 8.3 cm; height, 2.1 cm  
 Ovoid lamp with vertical handle; reddish-yellow (5YR 7/6) clay, red (10R 5/8) slip; on rim, raised dots.
9. B L.619, 6569  
 Length, 7.5 cm; height, 2.8 cm  
 Lamp with concave nozzle; reddish-yellow (5YR 6/6) clay; on rim, a herringbone pattern; on nozzle, an amphora; ring base.

\*Figures in parenthesis represent Munsell numbers.

10. B L.88028, 880138  
Length, 8 cm; height, 2.8 cm  
Lamp with concave nozzle; reddish-yellow (5YR 6/6) clay; on rim, a herringbone pattern; on nozzle, a lamp; ring base.
11. B L.614, 6837  
Length, 9.3 cm; height, 3.2 cm  
Elongated lamp with concave nozzle; reddish-yellow (5YR 6/6) clay fired to dark gray (10YR 4/1) on surface; on rim, alternating concentric circles and lozenges; on nozzle, three-petaled flower; broken loop handle; ring base.
12. E L.841, 10535  
Height, 2.8 cm  
Lamp with concave nozzle; reddish-yellow (5YR 6/6) clay; on rim, concentric circles; on nozzle, a cross; ring base.
13. B L.614, 6825  
Height, 3.1 cm  
Round lamp; reddish-yellow (5YR 7/6) clay; on rim, geometric designs; ring base.
14. B L.614, 6747  
Length, 6.9 cm; height, 2.1 cm  
Round lamp; reddish-yellow (5YR 7/6) clay; plain rim; ring base.
15. B L.620, 6630  
Light red (10R 6/8) clay; on rim, raised dots and lines.
16. B L.614, 6768  
Length, 9 cm; height, 2.8 cm  
Round lamp with rectangular nozzle; reddish-yellow (7.5YR 7/6) clay; on rim, circles; a string of raised dots around the filling hole; on nozzle, concentric lozenges within rectangle.
17. B L.619, 6621  
Length, 9.5 cm; height, 3 cm  
Round lamp with rectangular nozzle; reddish-brown (5YR 5/4) clay; on rim, stylistic flowers; on nozzle, a seven-branched candlestick; ring base.
18. B L.87911, 879083/1  
Light red (2.5YR 6/8) clay; handle decorated with geometric designs.
19. B L.614, 6834  
Length, 8 cm; height, 2.1 cm  
Round lamp; reddish-brown (5YR 5/3) clay; on rim, a radial pattern; on nozzle, a stylistic branch.
20. B L.254, 2676/1  
Elongated pear-shaped lamp; light red (2.5YR 6/8) clay, gray (5YR 5/1) core; on rim, lines; on nozzle, a palm branch.
21. E L.65027, 651366  
Length, 8.6 cm; height, 3.1 cm  
Elongated lamp with slightly concave nozzle; reddish-yellow (5YR 6/6) clay; on rim, a herringbone pattern; on nozzle, an amphora; handle decorated with a palm branch; ring base.

22. B L.242, 2147

Length, 10.2 cm; height, 3.2 cm

Elongated lamp with slightly concave nozzle; reddish-yellow (5YR 6/6) clay; on rim, a scroll with bunches of grapes; on nozzle, a multispoked wheel; handle decorated with a palm branch.

23. B L.240, 2410

Pink (5YR 7/4) clay, traces of light red (10R 6/8) slip; on rim, rows of raised dots; a string of raised dots around filling hole; cross-shaped handle.

24. G L.75524, 755061

Reddish-yellow (5YR 7/6) clay; round handle decorated with a cross.

25. G L.715, 7299

Ovoid lamp; reddish-yellow (5YR 7/8) clay, traces of red (10R 5/8) slip; on rim, closed triangles; low ring base.

26. B L.284, 2783

Length, 10.1 cm; height, 3.5 cm

Elongated lamp with slightly concave nozzle; reddish-yellow (7.5YR 7/6) clay; on rim, a radial pattern and a ladder design on both sides of nozzle; small sunken base.

27. E L.610, 8535

Length, 10.5 cm; height, 3.3 cm

Lamp with round body and rectangular nozzle; reddish-yellow (5YR 7/6) clay, traces of red (2.5YR 5/8) slip. On rim, scrolls with bunches of grapes; on nozzle, a five-branched candlestick.

28. E L.75005, 750156/2

Lamp with round body and rectangular nozzle; very pale brown (10YR 7/3) clay, light red (7.5R 6/8) slip; on nozzle, a woman's face.

29. G L.65509, 655328

Ovoid lamp; light red (10R 6/8) clay; on rim, a vegetal decoration; on discus, a cross.

30. G L.75575, 755168

Lamp with circular body; light red (2.5YR 6/8) clay.

31. A L.105, 1058/2

Length, 10 cm; height, 3.8 cm

Oval lamp; light red (2.5YR 6/6) clay; on rim, a herringbone pattern, rows of dots, and two multispoked wheels.

32. C L.354, 3643

Length, 9.7 cm; height, 3.7 cm

Oval lamp; reddish-yellow (5YR 7/6) clay; on rim, a vegetal decoration; ridged base follows shape of lamp.

33. B Surface

Height, 4.4 cm

Lamp biconical in section; light red (2.5YR 6/8) clay; on rim, an eleven-branched candlestick and a rectangle filled with net pattern.

34. B L.617, 6449

Length, 10 cm; height, 3.6 cm

Oval lamp; reddish-yellow (5YR 7/8) clay, gray (5YR 5/1) core; on rim, a herringbone

pattern, net pattern, and lines; on channel, concentric circles and sieve(?); base follows shape of lamp.

35. E L.1004, 12270  
Length, 13 cm; height, 4.8 cm  
Boat-shaped lamp; light red (10R 6/8) clay; plain rim; on channel, a schematic human face; base follows shape of lamp.

36. E L.65012, 650143  
Length, 11.5 cm; height, 3.6 cm  
Triangular lamp; red (2.5YR 5/6) clay; on rim, a net pattern; base follows shape of lamp.

37. G L.54159, 541500  
Length, 10.7 cm; height, 3.3 cm  
Slipper-shaped lamp; light red (2.5YR 6/6) clay fired to light brownish-gray (10YR 6/2); on rim, a radial pattern, geometric designs, and stylistic branches; high handle ending in an animal's head; ring base.

38. E L.1013, 12329  
Slipper-shaped lamp; light red (2.5YR 6/6) clay; on rim, a radial pattern; on handle, a cross.

39. E L.54227, 542597  
Slipper-shaped lamp; red (2.5YR 5/8) clay, gray (2.5YR 5/0) core; on rim, triangles filled with lines.

40. E L.565, 6004  
Upper part of lamp mold; light red (2.5YR 6/8) clay, light gray (10YR 7/2) core; on rim, a radial pattern; on handle, a cross and lines; decorated on back with wavy lines.

41. E L.54216, 542408  
Length, 10 cm; height, 3.6 cm  
Elongated almond-shaped lamp; reddish-yellow (7.5YR 7/6) clay; on rim, hexagons; on channel, a branch; base follows shape of lamp.

42. G L.960, 13485  
Elongated almond-shaped lamp; light red (2.5YR 6/6) clay, red (2.5YR 5/8) slip; on rim, two peacocks.

43. G L.706  
Length, 9.5 cm; height, 4 cm  
Pear-shaped lamp; very pale brown (10YR 8/4) clay, traces of light red (2.5YR 6/6) slip; on rim, half-circles; on channel, a Kufic inscription: "Allah"; ring base.

44. E L.1020, 12603  
Length, 9.7 cm; height, 3.1 cm  
Pear-shaped lamp with square filling hole; reddish-yellow (5YR 7/8) clay; on rim, concentric circles; on channel, a Kufic inscription in reverse: "bi'llah"; triangular base.

45. E L.622, 12431  
Pear-shaped lamp; very pale brown (10YR 8/4) clay, red (10R 5/8) slip; on rim, half-circles and a Kufic inscription: "Allah"; on channel, the same inscription in reverse.

46. E L.565, 5966

Lower part of lamp mold; white (5Y 8/2) clay; ring base decorated with an eight-spoked wheel.

47. E L.54450, 544455

Length, 10.3 cm; height, 3.2 cm

Pear-shaped lamp; pale yellow (5Y 8/3) clay; on rim, half-circles and small circles filled with dots; on channel, three circles; ridged base follows shape of lamp.

48. E L.74575, 745942

Light red (10R 6/8) clay, red (7.5R 5/8) slip.

49. E L.75075, 751527

Round lamp; reddish-yellow (7.5YR 6/6) clay, white (5YR 8/1) core; on rim, incised lines; plain discus with two filling holes; high loop handle; ring base.

50. B L.614, 6784/3

Ovoid lamp; light red (10R 6/8) clay; on rim, a ladder design; on discus, part of decoration.

51. B L.291, 6013

Elongated lamp with high handle; very pale brown (10YR 8/3) clay, traces of reddish-brown (5YR 4/4) slip; on handle, half-circles and lines.

52. E L.571, 8075

Length, 8.8 cm; height, 2.2 cm

Round lamp; bronze; plain rim with pseudo-double axes; a circle of lines around filling hole; low discus base.

53. G L.706, 7127

Length, 13.2 cm; height, 3.1 cm

Elongated lamp; bronze; plain rim; high handle decorated with a seven-branched candlestick (which is missing), *lulav*, *etrog*, and *shofar*; high ring base with a square hole.

54. E L.75005, 750552

Length, 18.5 cm; height, 5 cm

Elongated lamp; bronze; plain rim; high handle; high ring base with a square hole.